

WIDE IS THE GATE

By
UPTON SINCLAIR



T. WERNER LAURIE LTD.
187 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1

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TO
MY MILLIONS OF FRIENDS
IN THE SOVIET UNION, WHO,
WHILE THIS BOOK WAS BEING WRITTEN,
HAVE BEEN DEFENDING
OUR COMMON CAUSE.

**"Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that
leadeth to destruction."**

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WIDE IS THE GATE

BOOK ONE

INTO THE LION'S MOUTH

I

Dust to Dust

I

FREDDI himself wouldn't have wanted an elaborate funeral or any fuss made over his broken body ; but funerals are not for the dead, only for the living. Here was his devoted Jewish mother, aged not so much in years as in feelings, and a prey to terror as well as grief. The calamities which had fallen upon her family and her race could not be blind accidents, they must have a cause ; somebody must have done something, and what could it be save that her people had again departed from the ways of their faith and incurred the wrath of that most jealous of Gods, who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him ? It was Jahweh, Lord God of Sabaoth, it was El Shaddai, the Terrible One, thundering as He had done all down the centuries. Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of Hosts.

The Lord God of Hosts had given to Leah Robin, formerly Rabinowich, a husband and two tall sons, and to them two lovely wives, and to one of these a son ; all blessings beyond price. But husband and sons and daughters-in-law all five had dared to treat with contumely the Law and the Prophets, to call themselves " modern " and to prate about " Reform," presuming to decide for themselves what was good and proper, regardless of all those commands which the Lord God of Israel had laid down in His holy books. The mother, though anxious in soul, had permitted herself to be dragged along ; trying to keep her family about her and to avoid dissension, she had seen one ancient custom after another dropped and forgotten in her home.

El Shaddai the Implacable had waited, for such is His way. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked : the Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the

storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers. . . . The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before His indignation ? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger ? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him.

Beyond anything which had confounded Job were the calamities which had fallen upon this happiest of Jewish families. The dreadful Nazis seizing first the father and then the younger son and throwing them into prison ; robbing the family of everything in the world, torturing the son in unspeakable ways and finally throwing him out of their land a piteous wreck. A mother who had been taught from earliest childhood that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom could draw only one conclusion from such a chain of events ; Jahweh was behaving according to His nature : the Lord God Omnipotent, who had cast out Adam and Eve and pronounced His terrible dooms, that in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and cursed is the ground for thy sake !

The inheritor of these dooms was now fleeing back to the ark of her covenant. Her son had been a poor strayed sheep, a " pink " sheep, tinged with Marxist hues, and it was too late to help him in this life, but at least she could prepare him for that resurrection to which the Orthodox look forward. He must be buried according to sacred tradition, with no concession to those fatal delusions known as " Reform." The stricken household was in a panic, and the estate upon which they lived was thrown into turmoil ; for the mother believed that a Jewish corpse was dishonoured if it was left above ground more than twenty-four hours, and it might not be buried after dark.

II

Rahel Robin, the young widow, had tended and watched over her husband for a couple of months ; she had heard him pleading for death and had made up her mind that that was the way of mercy for him. She had no idea whatever that this so cruelly tortured body would ever rise from the grave, whether in its present distorted shape or restored to its original perfection. But there was no restraining the hysteria of the older woman. Mama wept and wrung her hands and tore her garments ; at the same time she rushed hither and thither, trying to perform those offices which decency requires for Jewish dead.

There were many of her race on the French Riviera, but they were for the most part rootless persons, parasites, and pleasure-seekers, as much tainted with scepticism and exposed to the wrath of Jahweh as the Robin family. Who among the devotees of fashion would understand how the fingernails of a dead person have to be trimmed? Who among bridge-playing ladies would know how to prepare a "meal of condolence"? Who among tennis-playing gentlemen would see to it that the mourners returning to the home washed their hands and forearms in accordance with the Talmudic formula?

There was a synagogue in Cannes, but Mama would have none of it; it was "Reformed," and the rabbi was so fashionable that he might as well have been an Episcopalian. But in the Old Town of the city there lived in direst poverty a few families from Russia and Poland, earning their bread by such labour as peddling, collecting rags, patching old clothes. They were real Jews, as Leah had once been; they had a sort of hole in the wall where they worshipped, and Leah had gone among them doing charity and had met the head of their synagogue. His name was Shlomo Kolodny, and he was no French rabbi of the Coast of Pleasure, wearing a big black arm-band at funerals, but a real scholar, a melamed, or teacher of the young; also he was the cantor, and the shammas, or sexton, and the shoet, or ritual butcher; in case of need he would be the undertaker according to the ancient code. After laborious days he spent his nights poring over sacred Hebrew texts and disputing in his imagination with learned ones whom he had known in Poland, concerning thousands of minute points of doctrine and practice which had been raised during twenty-five centuries of dealings between Jahweh and His Chosen People.

So now the chauffeur of Bienvenu drove in haste to the city and came back with this Shlomo of all trades, wearing a long black beard and a badly stained Prince Albert which he probably thought looked like an old-style caftan. In a Yiddish slightly mixed with French he assured the bereaved mother that he knew everything and would do it in style, and no "Reform" tricks whatever—"Pas de tout, Frau Robin, *niemals, niemals* will I drain the blood from a good Jew or put any poisons into him." He rubbed his hands together and purred, for he knew all about this lady whose husband had been one of the richest men in Germany and who was still important enough to be a guest on one of the finest estates of the Cap d'Antibes.

A great consolation he was to Mama. He hastened to assure her that she need not worry because her dear one was buried so far from home; if she so desired, a little forked stick could be put in the

grave, wherewith he could dig his way to Palestine when the last trumpet blew ; and of course the screws in the coffin lid would be left loose for him. As for the mutilations which evil men had done upon his body, they would all be repaired, and a noble young Jew would arise, transformed into an angel shining like a star. His broken fingers would be mended and he could play his clarinet for the greater glory of the Most High. Meanwhile his soul was comfortable in a sort of dove-cot in Hades, with an immense number of tiny compartments for the containing of righteous souls. This wasn't exactly accepted doctrine, but Shlomo had read it in some ancient text and Mama found it most comforting.

There are some of the old ways which are utterly impossible in modern days. The cemetery was up in the hills, and while city people have not forgotten how to walk, they have forgotten that it is possible to do so. The coffin and the mourners would have to be transported in motor cars, but the men would ride in separate cars, followed by the women, and when they came to the gates of the cemetery everybody would enter on foot. Tactfully the melamed mentioned that in his flock were a number of poor women who would make excellent mourners ; they would expect to be paid only a few francs each, plus a meal, and they would weep copiously and make a truly impressive funeral. It was too much to expect that all the Jews of Cannes or even of the village of Juan-les-Pins would stop work and follow the cortège ; alas, they wouldn't even know that if they met it on the street they were in duty bound to turn and accompany it a distance of at least four cubits. Who could even tell them how much a cubit was ?

There was the question of the *hesped*, the funeral eulogy. Shlomo was competent to pronounce it, but he had never met the deceased, and somebody would have to tell him what to say. At this point the young widow dried her tears and broke into the discussion. The person who should deliver the oration was the dead man's dearest friend, the one who knew him best and had risked his life to get him out of Naziland. This friend was in Paris, and Rahel had telephoned to him ; he had promised to hire a plane and arrive in Cannes before the day was over. Surely Mama must know that it would be Freddi's wish to have the wonderful Lanny Budd speak the last words over his grave.

This was embarrassing to the master of ceremonies. To be sure, there was nothing in the Torah to forbid a *goy* to speak at a funeral ; but it would seem very " modern," and would trouble the Orthodox, into whose hands the mother wished to entrust her son's fate. Nevertheless, Rahel insisted : not merely would it be Freddi's wish,

but also that of his father and his elder brother. They, alas, were in South America, and there was no way to consult them; but Rahel knew their minds, and Mama knew that they looked with disfavour upon her most cherished ideas. So there would have to be two orations; Shlomo would speak the proper conventional words and then dear kind Lanny Budd would say whatever came from his heart. Everyone who attended the funeral, Jew or Gentile, would know how much the two young men had meant to each other, how many clarinet and piano duets they had played, and for how many months Lanny had laboured to get his friend out of the clutches of Adolf Hitler and Hermann Wilhelm Göring.

III

It was a mild day in early October, and Lanny's plane should arrive in time. The hour for the ceremonies was set as late as possible, and the bereaved women summoned friends by telephone. By various means word was spread among all Jews, rich and poor, who might be willing to attend; for it is necessary to the honour of the deceased that there shall be a procession, accompanied by convincing demonstrations of grief.

Rahel took a step which came near to spoiling the occasion for her mother-in-law; she sent a message to a Spanish Socialist who was employed in Cannes and who ran the workers' school which Freddi and Lanny had helped to finance. Yes, indeed, Raoul Palma would attend the funeral, and many of the comrades would find ways to leave their work and pay the last tribute to a brave and loyal soul. The funeral ought to have been delayed for several days so as to give the anti-Fascists of the Midi an opportunity to make a demonstration of it. But since Moses hadn't known about refrigerants and formaldehyde, the comrades would do their best at short notice and later would hold a memorial meeting with music and Red speeches.

Towards the middle of the afternoon the motor-cars began to assemble in the drive which circled the pink stucco villa of Bienvenu. Some parked their cars and waited decorously outside the gates, ready to take their places in the procession, and not realizing how this would mix things up. It was hard for modern people to understand that men must precede the hearse and women follow it. Such has been the fate of the most holy customs in these evil days—people don't even know that they exist!

Six pall-bearers carried the plain wooden coffin to the hearse and

then took their places in a car preceding it. In front went the car with the melamed and the little five-year-old son of the deceased. His mother would have preferred to spare him this ordeal, but the grandmother insisted that duty required him to become familiar with grief, and on the way the melamed would teach him the words of a Hebrew prayer which would be helpful to his father's soul.

Next rode the men friends, taking with them various Jewish males who were too poor to have cars of their own. Behind the hearse rode the mother and the widow, heavily veiled; no one would see their faces or that of Freddi, which had been distorted by pain beyond power of an undertaker's art. Next rode the women friends of the family, these also taking a few poor women, to symbolize the fact that in the eyes of Jahweh all are the same; all are commanded to appear before Him in white grave-clothes of the same humble and unpretentious cut.

Slowly the cortège proceeded into the city of Cannes, and everywhere, according to the French custom, passers-by stopped and the men bared their heads respectfully. But apparently not one of them knew that he should walk four cubits, a distance of six feet, with the procession. It went by appointment to the school, where quite a company had assembled; at least fifty men and women, but they had no idea that the sexes should be separated. They were working people, with a few intellectuals; some were black-clad and others had armbands of crape; several carried wreaths, again being ignorant of ancient Jewish prejudices. They stood respectfully until the last car had passed, and then they fell in behind, carrying a red banner having two clasped hands and the initials E.T.M., *École des Travailleurs du Midi*.

IV

So into the beautiful hills which line the Côte d'Azur. When they came to the gates of the cemetery the cortège stopped, and the pall-bearers bore the coffin to the grave. Three wealthy and fashionable friends of the family did not enter the cemetery grounds, but watched the procedure from outside, reading the prayers which they could not hear. The reason was that they belonged to the tribe of the priests, the Cohanim, who are not permitted to enter a burial ground, a place contaminated and perhaps a haunt of evil spirits.

Frequently the pall-bearers stopped and set down their burden; this was not because they were weary, but because it was a part of

the ritual. As they walked, the melamed recited the Ninety-First Psalm, full of assurances to those who put their trust in the Most High. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt thou trust : His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night ; nor for the arrow that flieth by day ; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness ; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; but it shall not come nigh thee. So spoke the psalmist ; he mentioned plagues and stones and lions and adders and dragons—but nothing about Nazis !

Several times male friends came forward at the pauses and replaced the pall-bearers, for this is a way to do honour to the deceased. Lanny Budd had arrived at the cemetery in a taxi-cab and waited at the gates ; when a friend of the family explained the custom in a whisper, Lanny stepped up and did his share. He had known the Robin family for twenty years, and had heard poor Mama wailing over her darling's dreadful fate. He would have done whatever she wished, even if it had included the most ancient custom of having the pall-bearers walk barefoot, lest they should stumble over the latches of their sandals.

The bier arrived at the grave, and the rabbi recited the *Zidduk ha-Din*, a Hebrew prayer ; very few knew what it meant, but it had fine rolling sounds. When the coffin had been lowered to its appointed place the Orthodox ones came forward, plucking bits of grass-roots and earth from the ground and throwing them upon the coffin as a symbol of the resurrection. They said a Hebrew formula which means : " And they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth." Some of the Gentiles threw flowers, and had to be excused because they didn't understand the proprieties. The Jewish people wept loudly, because it was good form and also because they felt themselves at one with the bereaved women, exiles in a strange land and heirs of the man of Uz. When the dark-eyed, pale little son of the dead man stepped forward and with tears on his cheeks recited the *Kaddish*, part Hebrew and part Aramaic, there were few dry eyes in the assembly.

Shlomo Kolodny delivered his *hesped*. He said about the son of Johannes Robin the same things he had said about a thousand other Jewish men in the course of his long service. He laid stress upon the young man's piety, a virtue in which Freddi had been lacking—unless you chose to give a modernized meaning to the word. He laid stress upon Freddi's dutifulness to his parents and to his wife

and child—virtues especially commanded by Jewish law. The melamed said another rolling Hebrew prayer, and then it was the turn of a young Gentile to speak for the Socialist portion of this oddly assorted procession.



Lanny Budd at this time was thirty-four but looked much younger. He had pleasant and frank American features and well-tanned and well-nourished skin; he wore a neatly trimmed little brown moustache, and a brown tropical worsted suit of a fashionable cut. He had no claim to being an orator, but had talked to the workers at the school and to other groups and didn't mind doing it when he had something to say. He understood clearly that funerals are for the living, and now his words were for Mama and Rahel and a few others who had really known the deceased; also for those workers for whom Freddi had often played music at the school.

The victim of the Nazis had been twenty-seven, and Lanny had corresponded with him since he was a little boy and had known him since he was a youth. In all those years Lanny had never known him to speak an unkind word or perform a dishonourable action. "He was as near to being perfectly good as one could ask of a human being; and I do not say that just because he is dead—I said it many times and to many people while he was living. He was an artist and a scholar. He knew the best literature of the land which he had made his own. He earned a doctoral degree at the University of Berlin, and he did this not for the honour nor yet for a livelihood but because he wanted to know what the wisest men had learned about the causes and the cure of poverty."

Dr. Freddi Robin had called himself a Socialist. This was not the place for a political speech, Lanny said, but those who had known and loved him owed it to his memory to study his ideas and understand them, not letting themselves be confused by calumny. Freddi had been done to death by cruel forces which he himself had understood and had refused to bow to. Others also would have to learn about them, and find out how to save the world from hatreds and delusions which are the root of wars. If we would do this, we would be serving this dead man's memory and be worthy to meet him in whatever future abode the Creator of us all may have prepared.

That was all, and it wasn't much of a speech. The Socialists had

come expecting more, and some would have been glad to supply it if invited. But this was a Jewish funeral, centred upon two sobbing women. Those who knew the proper way to behave at funerals formed two parallel lines leading back to the cemetery gates, and as the chief mourners walked between these lines everyone recited a formula beginning "*Hamokom yehanem*," meaning: "May God comfort you in the midst of all those who mourn for Zion and Jerusalem." Just inside the gates of the cemetery stood the melamed with a collection-plate, and no one failed to drop in a coin. This was for charity, of great importance to every Jew. "*Tzedaka tatzil mimavet*," recited Shlomo, meaning: "Charity delivereth from death."

Lanny stepped into the waiting taxi-cab, and when he reached *Bienvenu* he found servants at the *porte-cochère* of the house with several basins of clean water and towels. It was necessary for every person who attended the funeral to cleanse the hands before entering. This was supposed to be done in a special ritual way, by letting the water run three times from finger-tips to elbows, but only the melamed knew this, and the reason—that evil spirits cannot pass running water and so can be kept from entering the house of mourning.

After that the family and their friends sat down with the melamed and recited seven times certain passages from the Book of Lamentations. Then they ate the "meal of condolence," which consisted of any non-alcoholic beverage, with bread and hard-boiled eggs, the last being symbols of life. Leah and Rahel Robin would eat these meals and none other over a period of seven days; wearing slippers, and with their dresses cut in such a way as to indicate that they had torn them in grief, they would sit on the floor or a low stool and read from the Book of Job. This is known as the *shiv'ah*, and during it they would receive consolatory visits and they and their friends would discuss only the virtues of the dear departed.

For eleven months they would not dance or take part in any form of recreation. There was a Talmudic reason for this precise period—if you mourned a full year, it would imply that you thought the deceased had been a bad man and was in Gehenna, that is, hell; you didn't quite wish to admit that, but you thought it wiser to take no chances, so you came as near to a year as propriety allowed. During this period the *Kaddish* must be recited every day for the benefit of the man's soul, and there was only one member of this household who was expected to say it—the five-year-old son. The prayers of women do not count, so little Johannes must say this long prayer, of which he wouldn't understand a single word.

VI

Lanny strolled about the grounds of *Bienvenu*, his home since he could remember. Always it seemed smaller after he had been visiting in *châteaux* and *hôtels particuliers*, but he loved it and brought his smartest friends to it with pride. Now it was his duty to look things over and see what repairs might be needed to any of the three villas on the estate. He must consult with Leese, the Provençal woman who had risen from the post of cook to an informal sort of steward. It would be his duty to report matters to his mother, who was visiting in England, but would be coming back after Christmas to take her part in the gaieties of a new Riviera season. He played with the dogs, of which there were always too many, because nobody could bear to dispose of them.

Lanny had a visit from Raoul Palma, a handsome young Spaniard—at least Lanny thought of him as young, just as he thought of himself. Hard to realize that Lanny was going to be thirty-five next month and that Raoul was past thirty! He wanted to get up a meeting in memory of Freddi Robin and wanted Lanny to come and make a good Socialist speech about him. But Lanny explained that his father was in Paris on one of his brief flying trips; also, Lanny had a wife and child in England whom he had been neglecting for the greater part of a year while getting his Jewish friends out of the clutches of Hitler and Göring. Lanny wrote a cheque to pay the cost of a hall, and told the grateful and attentive schoolmaster some of the things to say about Freddi.

They talked about the progress of the school and about the political situation in France and other countries. That was the way a "parlour Pink" got his education and kept his contacts with the workers. Lanny apologized for his own way of life: as an art expert, advising the rich about the buying of paintings, he had a reason for travelling to all the cities and towns of this old and fear-tormented continent; as an American he was assumed to be a neutral in Europe's quarrels, and it was the part of wisdom for him to keep that position. Thus he could meet the great ones, enjoy their confidence, and gain information which he could pass on quietly to working-class persons who could make use of it. The Spaniard was one of these; he had been born in a peasant hut and had been a humble clerk in a shoe-shop; but with a small subsidy from Lanny he had become a leader, attending conferences, making speeches, and furnishing news to the Socialist and labour press of the Midi.

VII

Raoul talked for a while about events in his native land, from which he had fled, driven by a cruel despotism which lined working-class rebels against the wall and shot them without ceremony. But three years ago the wretched King Alfonso had been dethroned; Spain had become a republic and its government had received an overwhelming vote of support from the people. Raoul Palma had been so excited he had wanted to go back, but Lanny had persuaded him that his duty lay with the school he had helped to build.

Now it was just as well, for the teacher was deeply discouraged about his own country. It was the old tragic story of party splits and doctrinal disputes; the factions couldn't agree on what to do, and the amiable elderly college professors and lawyers who composed the new government found it fatally easier to do nothing. The Spanish people continued to starve; and for how long would they rest content with the most well-meaning "Liberalism" which gave them neither bread nor the means of producing it?

Lanny didn't know Spain very well—only from stops on a yachting-cruise and a plane trip. But he knew the Spaniards here on the Riviera; they came to play golf and polo, to dance and gamble and flirt in the casinos, or to shoot pigeons, their idea of manly sport. They read no books, they knew nothing, but considered themselves far above the rest of mankind. Alfonso liked to be amused, and when on holiday he had unbent with the rich Americans of this Coast of Pleasure. Lanny had played tennis with him, and wasn't supposed to beat him, but had disregarded this convention. Now the ex-monarch was in Rome, intriguing with Mussolini to be restored to his throne.

"You ought to go to Spain!" insisted Raoul. "You ought to know the Spanish workers—they haven't all been killed. They have seen the light of modern ideas, and nothing will be able to blind them again."

Lanny replied that he had often thought of such a trip. "There are pictures there I want to see and study. But it might be better to wait till you have got through expropriating the landlords, and then I can pick up a lot of bargains."

He said this with a smile, knowing that his friend would understand. Whenever the young organizer came to him for funds, Lanny would say: "I've just sold a picture, so I can afford it."

Or he'd say : " Wait till next week ; I've got an oil princess in tow and expect to sell her a Detaze." Raoul knew that in a storeroom on this estate were a hundred or more of the paintings of Lanny's former stepfather, and whenever a purchaser came along, the École des Travailleurs du Midi could have a mass meeting or a picnic with refreshments and speeches. But don't say anything about Lanny's part in it !

VIII

This was in October of 1934, and Adolf Hitler had held power in Germany for not quite two years. He was the man who dominated Lanny Budd's thoughts ; he was the new centre of reaction in Europe, dangerous not merely because of his fanaticism, but also because he had in his hands the industrial power of Germany and was proceeding to turn it into military power. " It isn't only what he has done to the Jews," said the art-expert. " He has done things much worse to the Socialists and to the whole labour movement in the Fatherland ; but you don't hear so much about it in the capitalist press of France."

They talked about this on their way into Cannes, where Lanny was taking the evening train for Paris. He drove his friend in the family car, with the chauffeur in the back seat to bring the car back. Lanny, who had met Hitler and heard him talk, warned Raoul that he was only half a madman and no fool whatever, but on the contrary a trickster of infinite cunning, who had managed to get the German people behind him by a programme of radical social changes which he had no slightest intention of carrying out. " We can't ignore him and his purposes," the American insisted. " We can't shut our eyes to him and go ahead with our plans just as if he didn't exist. He is a reactionary and a slave-driver, and he has said in his book that his programme requires the annihilation of France."

This was hard doctrine for Raoul Palma, an internationalist preaching disarmament and brotherhood. Here was his friend and patron insisting that the time for such ideas was past ; nobody could trust Adolf Hitler in any agreement, and only prompt and united action could keep him from rearming Germany. Frenchmen of all parties had to get together on this programme before it was too late. " But, Lanny," objected the school director, " the French capitalists would rather have Hitler than have us ! "

" That's because they don't know Hitler," was the reply.

IX

They talked about the disquieting state of the country in which they lived. The head of the French government was a round elderly gentleman wearing an old-fashioned white imperial; a former President of the Republic who had become Premier during a crisis in which nobody would trust anybody else. The mainspring of his being was a childish vanity, and he took delight in addressing the people of France over the radio as if they were his own progeny. But they were a stubborn brood, and by loud clamour had managed to keep Premier Doumergue from interpreting the constitution of the nation so that he could act independently of the Cabinet. What he wanted to do with his power was suspected by Raoul and confirmed by Lanny, who knew that the Premier of France held secret conferences with Colonel de la Roque, head of the Croix de Feu, the leading organization of the French Fascists.

The American felt less anxiety about the situation because of the Foreign Minister, Louis Barthou, a Frenchman of the old school who had learned to distrust any and every sort of German and therefore was not to be fooled by Adolf Hitler's wiles. This was a new point of view to Raoul, who looked upon Barthou as just one more politician and pointed to his reactionary utterances on domestic affairs; but Lanny felt sure he knew what was in the little round head with the high dome and the grey moustache and beard beneath. "He has some fine pictures and showed them to me, and a shelf of the books he has written—including lives of Danton and Mirabeau. You see he really knows the old revolutionary traditions."

"They all learn about them," replied the sceptical schoolman; "the better to fool the workers and sell them out—exactly as Mirabeau did."

"Barthou will never sell out France to Germany. When I met him was before Hitler took power, but the little Gascon realized exactly what the Führer meant. He said: 'Hitler is the man who is going to dominate our political life for as long as he lives.'"

Lanny reminded his friend of the "grand tour" which Barthou had recently made in the Balkans, to rally Yugoslavia and other states to an alliance against the new German counter-revolution. His success had been made plain by the effort the Nazis had made to bomb his train in Austria. "That's the way you tell your friends nowadays," added the American, and went on to point out that the determined little lawyer had been willing to drop his antagonism to the Soviet Union in the face of a greater peril; he had helped to

bring Russia into the League of Nations last month and was working hard to prepare public opinion for a military alliance between that country and France.

I

The American was in a sombre mood, the funeral having brought back to his mind all the horrors he had witnessed since the Nazi Führer had seized the mastery of Germany. Lanny told of his meeting with Freddy Robin in Berlin, a fugitive from the Nazis, sleeping in the Tiergarten or in a shelter for the unemployed; then the broken and shuddering figure he had helped to carry across the boundary line between Germany and France, when at last it had pleased the fat General Göring to release his prey. Dreadful, unspeakably wicked men the Nazi chieftains were, and Lanny was haunted by the idea that it was his duty to give up all pleasures and all other duties and try to awaken the people of Western Europe to a realization of the peril in which they stood.

So he spoke with repressed feeling; and then, when they reached the station, he bought an evening paper to read on the train. Glancing at its banner headlines he gave a cry. "LE ROI ALEXANDRE ET BARTHOUS ASSASSINÉS!"

Quickly Lanny's eyes ran over the story, and he read the salient details to his friend. The King of Yugoslavia had come for a visit of state to France, to celebrate the signing of their treaty of alliance; he had landed at Marseille, and the Foreign Minister had met him at the dock. They had been driven in an open car into the city, through cheering throngs. In front of the stock exchange a man had run out from the crowd, shouting a greeting to the king, and before the police could stop him he had leaped upon the running-board and opened fire with an automatic gun, killing the king and fatally wounding Barthou, who tried to shield his guest.

The crowd had beaten the assassin to death, in spite of the efforts of the police to save him. He had been identified as one of a Croatian terrorist organization; but Lanny said: "You'll find the Nazis were behind him!" So it proved, in due course. The reactionary conspirators had been publishing a paper in Berlin, with funds obtained from the head of the foreign policy department of the Hitler party. The assassin had been travelling on a forged passport, obtained in Munich, and the weapon he had used bore the trademark of Mauser, the German munitions firm.

Such was the new technique for the conquest of power. Fool those who were foolable, buy those who were buyable, and kill the

rest. It was the third Nazi murder of foreign statesmen within a year. First, Premier Duca of Rumania had been shot to death. Then a band of gangsters had broken into the office of Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria, the Catholic statesman who had been responsible for the slaughter of the Socialist workers in Vienna and the bombardment of those blocks of model apartments which Lanny had so greatly admired. And now both signers of the Yugoslav-French agreement had been wiped out.

"Good God!" exclaimed Raoul. "How much more will the people need to wake them up?"

"A lot more, I'm afraid," was Lanny's heartsick reply. "You and I, Raoul, chose a bad time to be born!"

2

Indoctus Pauperiem Pati

I

IN HIS youth Lanny had attended St. Thomas's Academy in Connecticut, and one of the subjects forced upon him was Latin. He had got so far as to translate several of the odes of Horace, and in his mind there remained a simile about a merchant whose vessels were wrecked, and he, "untaught to bear poverty," refitted them and sent them forth again. Lanny thought of that when he sat at luncheon in the Hotel Crillon with another merchant, a Roman though he did not know it, and heard him planning with eagerness a new expedition of his ships. In nineteen hundred years the world had changed and now they were ships of the air, but that made little difference in the psychology of the merchant.

Robbie Budd was entering his sixties, but was still driven by pride and ambition, still determined to prove that nothing could lick him. Five years ago the Wall Street crash had knocked him clean over the ropes, but he had picked himself up and wiped the blood out of his eyes and come in for round after round. The fact that his father had not named him as successor to the presidency of Budd Gunmakers Corporation, the fact that the great concern was no longer a Budd family affair, these blows might have finished a less sturdy fighter; but here was Lanny's father ready to start all over again and show them the stuff he was made of. By "them" he

meant his family, his friends, his business associates and rivals ; more especially his older brother, who had fought him all his life for control of Budd's, and the Wall Street banking crowd who had taken over the family name and the institution which for close to a century had been the family pride.

Robbie's contract as European representative of Budd Gunmakers still had more than a year to run, but Robbie was on the point of dropping it. He had been willing to work for his stern old Puritan father, but he couldn't be happy serving a bunch of interlopers, no matter how greatly they valued his services and how careful they were of his feelings. Robbie was reviving the dream of his early years, of a magnificent new fabricating plant to be built on the Newcastle River above the Budd plant. The land was still there, and could be bought more cheaply than ever—for, whatever the New Deal had accomplished by the end of 1934, it hadn't brought back land values and wasn't likely to.

The sentimentalists and cranks had had their way, and America lay disarmed in the face of a world of enemies—so Robbie declared. Budd Gunmakers was producing mostly hardware and what Robbie called "notions," meaning everything from hairpins to freight elevators. What the salesman now had in mind was the weapon of the future, and the means of transport of the future, the plane. All the world was taking to the air ; the nations which wished to survive would be driven to it ; and behind the sheltered and well-protected waters of Long Island Sound Robbie would erect an aeroplane factory. Before long he would make it into the greatest in the world, and give the name of Budd's a new and better meaning.

An expert in aerodynamics had showed up, and in an abandoned warehouse near the Newcastle docks had done a lot of experimenting ; Robbie had helped him with a few thousand dollars, and they had got an important new design for an internally braced flying wing. Also Robbie had discovered a fellow with patents for an air-cooled radial engine that was going to add another hundred miles to the speed of planes, and if they could do that they would own the world. Robbie was on fire with enthusiasm about it ; he had organized a company and gone the rounds among his friends, those who had put their money into New England-Arabian Oil with him and done very well. Business was picking up and people had money, but good investments were scarce, because the government was putting out most of the bonds. So Robbie had had no trouble in selling stock in Newcastle, and had taken an option on the land. Now he was in Paris to talk with Zaharoff and with Denis de Bruyne and some of Denis's associates ; later he was going to London to

see investors there ; he was doing it all privately—the Wall Street crowd wasn't going to get a look-in. "Believe me, son, I'm not going to stay a poor man." *Indoctus pauperiem pati !*

II

Robbie sat at the well-appointed *table à deux*, enjoying his *sole meunière* and his Chablis, dry and well chilled. Business didn't interfere with his appetite, quite the contrary ; he had always taken the good things of life as they came along, and in spite of his greying hair and hard work he was robust and rosy. He enjoyed telling about his affairs ; not exactly boasting, but speaking with quiet assurance, pointing out how he had been right and forgetting when he had been wrong. He had studied the field thoroughly and convinced himself that aviation was the industry of the future, the only one that wasn't overbuilt. It held the advantage that it was both a peace and a war industry ; you could turn out "flivver planes," and then with only a few changes in design you could be turning out training planes and perhaps fighters. "Our country is asleep," declared the ever-vigilant patriot ; "but the day is coming when everybody will be grateful to a few men who have learned to design high-speed planes and to make them in a hurry."

The promoter had an appointment with the one-time munitions king of Europe for the following morning and he wanted to have his son come along. "You know how to handle that old spider better than I do," he said, meaning it for a compliment. "You might sell him a Detaze ; but don't try it until I get through with my deal. If I get this thing going, you'll never want for money."

"I don't want for it now," said Lanny, amiably.

Robbie didn't notice this unhelpful remark, but went on to say that Denis de Bruyne and his elder son were to dine with them in the evening ; he had taken the liberty of assuming that Lanny wouldn't mind having the matter put before Denis. Robbie phrased it tactfully, as if the husband of Lanny's former *amie* were Lanny's own special property.

"Denis is a business man," the son replied. "If he puts his money into anything, he'll look into it carefully."

Robbie inquired about the funeral, and when Lanny described the ceremonies he couldn't keep from smiling, even though he felt deeply for the bereaved family. "It's hard to understand how people would want to go through such a rigmarole," he commented. "But I suppose that when they suffer too much they lose their balance."

"It's what Mama was brought up in," replied Lanny. "It helped her in a crisis, so it's all right."

"No use expecting women to be rational," added the father; it was one of his oft-repeated formulas. Following an obvious train of thought, he added: "Beauty's coming over from London to see what she can do with some of her friends."

Lanny knew what that meant without asking any questions. From boyhood he had watched this team at work on one sort of deal or another: his "go-getter" father and his lovely mother, who passed for the father's divorced wife, working together so perfectly that nobody could understand why they should ever have separated. It was always something involving large sums of money, and also what most people would have called gossip, but which Robbie would refer to as psychology; it involved the rehearsing of conversations in advance—you say this and then I'll say that, and so on; because even in the smartest society people want to believe that you are entertaining them because you like them and not just because you want them to invest in oil stock or to introduce you to a government official who is charged with the purchasing of light machine guns for his country. Most of the time the deal would be put through, and then Mabel Blackless, alias Beauty Budd, alias Madame Detaze, and now Mrs. Parsifal Dingle, would receive a present of a new car or a mink coat or perhaps a cheque for a couple of thousand dollars with which to do her own purchasing.

"Why do you take so much trouble?" asked the son of this odd partnership. "Why don't you put your plans before Irma?"

"I want a lot of money this time—five millions, at least. I mean to build a model plant, and I don't want to start on a shoe-string."

"That's all right, Robbie, Irma's got it, and you know how highly she thinks of you."

"Yes, son, but that's one thing I never have been willing to do—to barge in on your marriage. If anything did go wrong with my enterprise—not that it possibly can—but I try to keep business apart from family."

Lanny understood quite well that he was having an expert salesman's tact applied to himself. Robbie fully meant to put the project before Irma, but he wanted to be told to do it. The younger man knew what he was expected to say and he didn't mind saying it. "Irma's doing her own deciding. She's quite proud of her judgment, and if you have a good proposition she'll expect you to put it before her; she wouldn't like it if you left her out."

"All right," said the father. "You tell her what I'm doing, and tell her I don't mean to approach her unless she asks for it."

III

The French practice of *la vie à trois*, which seems so strange to Americans and so highly immoral to the orthodox, had made Denis de Bruyne and Robbie Budd into friends of some ten years' standing. In the Anglo-Saxon parts of the world an elderly husband and *père de famille* would hardly choose for a friend the father of his wife's young lover; but in Paris it had come about, and two men of large affairs had discovered that business customs are more powerful than marital in the shaping of minds and manners. These two, who lived and operated three thousand miles apart, thought and felt in much the same way about their worlds. In return for Denis's courtesy in listening while Robbie abused "that man Roosevelt" and his so-called "New Deal" which really was the rankest kind of Socialism, Robbie would listen while Denis applied the same phrases to Léon Blum and his Socialist party which really was the rankest kind of Communism.

Robbie Budd was a son of Puritan ancestors, but he was a rebel son and had gone out into the world prepared to take it as he found it. He had watched his boy as a happy lover, then through a period of widowerhood of an odd irregular sort, and now for a period of godfatherhood of the same sort. Lanny was only a few years older than Denis, *fils*, and Charlot, but he had promised their dying mother to look after them, and when he was in Paris he seldom failed to meet them; he would inquire gravely about their affairs, and they in turn would dutifully report, and accept whatever admonitions he considered it proper to give—even though they had no intention of following them.

Robbie's business brought him often to Paris, where he would meet Denis, and they would discuss the state of America and France, and those nations whose affairs were tied up with them. Each met a sensible man of the world, cherishing the same hopes and balked by the same evil forces. Each would have liked to have his own way, but could succeed only to a limited extent. Each was troubled by a vague sense of inadequacy, and each had sons who tried unsuccessfully to tell him what was wrong. When the fathers met together they comforted each other, forming a clan against both the demagogues and the younger generation.

Denis was past seventy, a handsome grey-haired man with a thin aristocratic face. His vices, which had broken up his marriage, hadn't seemed to injure his health. Lanny had been told that he had an unfortunate hankering for virgins; but Denis had never

mentioned the subject. To his father Lanny had expressed a mild curiosity on the subject of an elderly Frenchman's affliction. How did one find virgins? Were there, in the lush underworld of Paris, merchants who made a speciality of this commodity? Or did one advertise in the newspapers: "Wanted virgins; highest prices paid; references required"? Having lived most of his life in the *beau monde*, Lanny had come to understand that a dignified and even austere appearance, the best *tournure* and the most gracious and benevolent manners did not exclude the possibility of secret practices, amusing or disgusting according as you chose to take such matters.

17

The dinner was served in the drawing-room of Robbie's suite, in order that the four men might be able to talk privately. Denis was a hard-headed person, and it wasn't necessary to use finesse with him. As soon as the waiter had departed Robbie said: "I have a project which I think will be of interest to you." The other replied: "Tell me about it, by all means."

Robbie launched on his "spiel," an exposition to which he had given as much care and study as Daniel Webster or Jean Jaurès would have devoted to an oration. He had practised it many times, varying it to fit the audience. It wasn't necessary to point out the importance of aviation in the modern world, for the Frenchman had more than once expressed himself on the subject; indeed, Robbie tactfully indicated that Denis's opinion had been one of the factors causing him to take up this project. He had come to France because he knew how deep was his friend's anxiety over the inadequacy of the country's air defences and what Lanny had told him of the rearmament campaign of General Göring, Commander of the German Air Force.

Said Robbie; "One thing you can be sure of, there will never be war between your country and mine; so, if I should succeed in building the world's best aeroplane factory in a part of the world where Göring cannot get at it, that would be a good thing for *la patrie* as well as for the individual investors. It is possible that I could go to the Germans with my proposition; but you know my feelings for France and how much I would prefer helping her to helping her enemies."

Robbie didn't say what he would do in the event that French capitalists didn't back him. On the other hand he didn't say that he wouldn't under any circumstances go to Germany; that would have

seemed to him sentimental, out of keeping with the character of a business man—and besides, Denis wouldn't have believed him. Business men talked on the basis of the open market, which modern techniques had broadened to include the world. Budd-Erling—that was to be the name of the new concern—would make planes for the world market, and no favouritism. We have our price and our terms of payment, and the rule is, first come, first served; your money is as good as the next fellow's, and we don't ask about your nationality or your politics or your religion, the colour of your flag or of your skin.

The owner of Paris taxi-cabs said it seemed to him that Robbie had a sound proposition. He asked many questions and Robbie answered them fully. The American had all the details in a folder, and the Frenchman said to leave it with him and he'd study it and decide what he could do. He offered to put it before some friends, and Robbie said he'd come back to Paris after he had got through in London. So everything was all right, and they went to talking politics—where a great many things were far from right.

The killing of Barthou had thrown French affairs into turmoil. The Foreign Minister had been one of the few real patriots left in the country, and who was going to take his place? Conferences were under way and wires were being pulled; Denis explained that he would have to leave early because he had to do his share of the pulling. It was a time of real peril for France—the mad Hitler was rearming his country rapidly, and his agents were busy intriguing and stirring up revolts in every nation, big and little. Meanwhile France was torn by domestic strife, and where among politicians would she find a friend and protector?

Once more Lanny Budd gazed down into the boiling pit of *la haute politique*; once more he smelled the rather nauseous odours which rose from it. Alas, Marianne, *la douce, la belle*, no longer seemed to Lanny the shining, romantic creature he had imagined in his happy boyhood; then he had loved her, and all her children, rich and poor, on that lovely Azure Coast where stood his home. But now Marianne was taking on an aspect somewhat drab; her honour was sold in the market-place, and the clamour of the traffickers spoiled the day and the night. French politicians were creatures of the Comité des Forges, of the great banks, of the *deux cents familles*; the head of one of these ruling families poured out details as to what prices had been paid and what services were being rendered. He was full of bitterness against upstarts and demagogues—save those whom he himself had hired.

Denis reported that the talk was of Pierre Laval as Barthou's

successor, and apparently this was a politician with whom de Bruyne had had experience. Like most of the pack, the innkeeper's son had started far to the left, and as soon as he got power had set out to line his pockets. When he was in danger of being exposed in one of the ever-recurrent scandals, he had saved himself by turning informer on his fellows. He had purchased a chain of papers all over France, and now was getting radio stations, useful in support of his financial and political intrigues. He had become as conservative as even Denis could have wished; indeed, so eager to preserve his property that he was an easy mark for the Nazi blackmailers. A man so wealthy could no longer think about France, but only about his own fortune.

Having told all this, and gone into detail about it, de Bruyne added: "I have to excuse myself now; I have an appointment with that *fripon mongol*"—that Mongolian rascal.



Next morning Beauty Budd arrived on the night train from Calais and Lanny went to meet her at the Gare du Nord; he was a dutiful son, and adored his full-blooming mother, even while he laughed at her foibles. There she was, descending from a *wagon-lit*; pink and gold fluffiness in a grey travelling-dress with fur boa to match. When he kissed her she said: "Don't muss me any worse—I look a fright." But Lanny, unfrightened, replied: "You are the eternal rose, and not one petal out of place."

Don't ask how old she was—it would be too unkind. She was the mother of a son who would be thirty-five next month and she discouraged the celebration of these recurrent calamities. She was gradually reducing in her own mind the age at which she had borne him, and she had been cheered by reading in the newspapers about an Indian girl in Peru who had produced a son at the age of five. When you have been so beautiful that you have been named for it; when you have seen all the men in restaurants and hotel lounges turn to stare at you; when you have been many times immortalized by the most celebrated painters—when you have enjoyed all these glories too long, you look into your mirror in the morning and the tears come into your eyes and you begin to work frantically with the tools of the cosmetician.

For one thing, you have to choose between *embonpoint* and wrinkles; and fate had chosen for Beauty Budd. The cream-pitcher remained her worst enemy; while a million women in

London and Paris strove in vain to get enough food, she failed mournfully in her efforts not to get too much. She was always trying new diets, but the trouble was they left her dizzy, and she had to have a few chocolates in between meals of one lamb chop with pear and cucumber salad minus dressing. She told about it, and then asked about the funeral. She had to reach for her delicate *mouchoir*, for Mama and Rahel had been her dear friends and yachting-companions, and she was the kindest of souls ; if she had ever done harm to any human being it was because the social system was too complicated for her to understand the consequences of her actions.

Robbie Budd had supported her upon a lavish scale, ever since he had fallen in love with her as a very young artist's model in this city of pleasure. He had acknowledged her son, in spite of the opposition of his Puritan family. So how could she fail to do everything she could for him ? By her combination of beauty, kindness, and social charm she had won the friendship of rich and important persons ; and if Robbie wanted to meet them and make deals with them, why shouldn't she lend her aid ? Robbie never cheated anybody ; what he sold was what they wanted to buy. If it was guns and ammunition, how could he help that ? If now it was going to be planes, well, he would give them their choice, for peace or for war. Nobody could hate death and destruction more than Lanny's mother ; she had spoken boldly and had made enemies by it, but had not been able to change the destiny of this old Continent.

Robbie was a married man, and a grandfather several times over. Beauty was a married woman, and a grandmother once, which was enough. She had her separate suite in the hotel, and when she met Robbie they shook hands as old friends and behaved with such propriety that the gossips had long ago lost interest in them. Beauty would have herself made presentable, and then she would get busy on the telephone, and soon would be in a round of events. Wives of retired capitalists and widows of elderly bankers would learn that Robbie Budd, the American munitions man, was in Paris, planning a new enterprise which might be of vital importance to French defence and incidentally might be paying dividends of twenty or thirty per cent. in a year or two.

VI

Meanwhile, Lanny was motoring his father to the Château de Balincourt, once the home of King Leopold, misruler of the Belgians, and now the retreat of Sir Basil Zaharoff, retired munitions king of

Europe and not retired Knight Commander of the Bath of England and Grand Officier de la Légion d'Honneur de France. The old gentleman was in his middle eighties, and saw very few people, but Lanny Budd possessed the key to his castle and his heart. Not merely had he known the noble Spanish lady who had been the old man's wife, but he had received her messages from the spirit world through a Polish medium whom he had discovered. Sir Basil would be most happy to see Mr. Budd and his son, so the secretary had said over the telephone; would they be able to bring Madame Zyszynski along with them?

Robbie talked about the strategy of approach to one of the most wary of men. "Talk to him about the duquesa," said the father. "Can't you recall something that will get him warmed up?"

"Beauty has been getting some interesting messages purporting to come from the Caillards," replied the son.

"Fine! Tell him about them; and if you can say that the spirits are riding in aeroplanes, that would really fetch him!" Robbie said that with a grin. He didn't exactly ask that his son should make up some story about Zaharoff's dead wife in the other world, yet if Lanny had proposed doing that, his father wouldn't have objected. It is all right to have scruples, but they should be used with discretion, and not while dealing with an old spider, an old wolf, an old devil, who for more than a generation had played with the nations of Europe as casually as other men play with chessmen on a board.

The lodgekeeper came out and looked them over; evidently he had his orders, and the gates swung back, and they drove up a broad drive to the stone château—two stories, rather squat, but with wide-spreading wings. A turbaned Hindu servant admitted them; all the servants were from Madras. It was a damp and chilly day, and the master, wearing a green smoking-jacket, sat before the fireplace in his very grand library, which went up the two stories and had a balcony with heavy bronze railings. All those books, at which Lanny gazed hungrily; he doubted if half a dozen of them were opened in the course of a year. The old man no longer had any hair on the top of his head, but still had the white imperial below it; his skin was drawn and yellowish-brown like old parchment. He did not rise from his seat or offer one of his palsied hands, but put cordiality into his tone as he told them to take the seats which had been placed for them.

"Sir Basil," said Lanny, at once, "have you heard that 'Birdie' is coming through?"

"Nobody troubles to tell me anything any more," was the sad reply.

"My mother wishes me to tell you about it." Beauty Budd and the Knight Commander of the Bath had both been guests of Lady Caillard in London not long before she had "passed over." She had been an ardent spiritualist and had made the usual promises to communicate with her friends from the other side. She had lived surrounded by mediums, and of course it was inevitable that these would begin getting messages from her. "Birdie," as she was known, had been strong on emotions but weak on brains, and it was to be expected that her words from the spirit world should bear that same character. "Vinnie" was Sir Vincent Caillard, who had been Zaharoff's business partner in Vickers-Armstrong and had been no fool, even if he had thought himself a maker of music as well as of munitions. Zaharoff knew his mind and thousands of things that had been in it. Now he listened attentively while Lanny told what he could remember of the séances.

"Oh, God, how I wish I could believe it!" exclaimed the lonely old man. His beard waggled as he talked, and he leaned forward, thrusting his hooked beak forward as if he thought he could smell the younger man's real thoughts. Lanny knew the one idea that was in his mind: was he ever going to see his beloved duquesa, the only person for whom he had really cared in a long life? He wanted so to believe it—and yet he hated so to be fooled! He wanted to hear that Lanny believed it; and yet, even if he heard it, he wouldn't be sure whether Lanny was being honest with him. When one has been outwitting other people for three-quarters of a century, how can one believe that anybody is being straightforward?

They sat close together, and their eyes met in a long stare. It was as near as they could ever come to intimacy. "Tell me, Sir Basil," asked the younger man, "have you any religion?"

"None, I fear," was the reply. "I have wished that I might. But how can a God permit what I have seen in this world?"

"A God might be leaving men to work out their own destiny."

"A God who made them what they are?"

"You believe, then, that you are an accident?"

"That seems to me the politest supposition I can make about the universe." It might have been humour, and it might have been tragedy; Lanny guessed that it was some of each.

VII

Not for a large amount of money would Robbie Budd have interrupted this conversation. He listened and watched and thought, like the practical psychologist he was. He was interested not in the

question of where Sir Basil was going to spend his future years, but only in what he was going to leave behind him. Anyone who didn't like Robbie would have said that his motive was greed, but Robbie would have treated such a person with quiet contempt; he had his answer, which Lanny had known by heart from his earliest days: Robbie wanted to get things done, and money was the means of doing it.

An engagement was made for Madame Zyzynski, the medium, to come to Balincourt for another visit, so that Sir Basil might find out if Birdie wished to talk to him. After which the old man must have realized that he wasn't being quite polite to the older of his guests; he turned, saying: "Well, Mr. Budd, what are you doing these days?"

It was an opening, and Robbie was prompt to take it. He replied: "I have come to ask for advice, Sir Basil." His host said that he would give it if he could, and Robbie went on: "I have been studying the world situation, on the basis of the best data I can get, and have come to the conclusion that the industry of the future is aviation. I believe it will be for the next generation what the motor-car was for the last."

The older man listened and nodded now and then as Robbie elaborated this thesis. Yes, it was true; he wasn't going to be here to see it, but it was bound to happen; any nation that didn't take to the air might as well give up before the next war started. If Mr. Budd knew sound aviation shares, those were the things to buy.

"That is not exactly what I am thinking of, Sir Basil," Robbie went on to tell about his dream of a perfect place for a perfect fabricating plant. "Aeroplane factories have been scratch affairs so far, and their techniques are based on small-scale operations. What I have in mind is to apply the principles of mass production to this new job; I want to put aeroplanes on a belt."

"That is a pretty large order, Mr. Budd."

"Of course; but if the industry is to be large, the order must be the same. Sooner or later somebody is going to become the Henry Ford of the air. He tried it himself, but has given up—just when success had become possible."

It was Lanny's turn to listen and watch and think; he, too, was something of a psychologist, though hardly a "practical" one. This aged plutocrat took on suddenly the aspect of a white-bearded gnome, sitting on a heap of treasure and watching with fear-stricken eyes every creature that came near. He had by now made sure that Robbie Budd wanted his money, and a lot of it, and he had lost

every trace of that expansiveness which conversation about Vinnie and Birdie had produced. This was danger !

But still he couldn't quite bear to break off the interview. The visitor was talking about profits, dividends of old-time magnificence. The Knight Commander and Grand Officer had known Robbie Budd for thirty years, and judged him a solid and capable fellow ; no speculator, no fly-by-night promoter, but one who put money to work and himself to work with it. At the Genoa Conference, where Robbie had been Zaharoff's agent, he had acted with competence ; later, when Zaharoff had gone in on New England-Arabian Oil, he had got the better of Robbie—but not enough so that he would look on his associate with contempt.

You couldn't ignore what a man like that was telling you. You couldn't help but be aroused, even if only by the memories which his voice and manner recalled. Those had been the days, and Zacharias Basileos Sahar or Zahar, who had been born of Greek parents in a peasant hut in Turkey and had become the real behind-the-scenes master of Europe, he was one who could say with the ancient Greek hero that much had he seen and known : cities of men, and manners, climates, councils, governments ; himself not least, but honoured of them all. If he couldn't exactly say that he had drunk delight of battle with his peers far on the ringing plains of windy Troy, at least he could claim to have sent a hundred thousand other men to drink that dubious delight. Those windy plains were near to the village of Mugla, where Zacharias Basileos had started his career, and also to the scene where twelve years ago his personally financed Greek army had been slaughtered by the Turks.

VIII

Robbie Budd expatiated upon the defences of Montauk Point, and the safety of Long Island Sound and its tributary rivers as a nesting-place for war industries ; he told about railway connections, and steel that was brought from the Great Lakes through the Erie Canal and the Hudson River. He pictured the factory of steel and glass he was going to build, air-conditioned, a twenty-four-hour-a-day plant. He showed the drawings of his air-cooled radial engine to Zaharoff, who had owned tens of thousands of engines. In its lighter parts Robbie was going to use magnesium, a metal which the industry had slighted. Small shavings of it are explosive, but he had a method of gathering them up automatically. Instead of hammering the cast parts into place he was going to freeze them

in liquid air and set them, and when they had returned to normal temperature they were there for life. When he was running tests on his engines he was going to hitch them up to generators and so make electricity for his plant.

So many new ideas this hard-driving Yankee had, and the retired munitions king watched him as a fascinated cobra watches its Hindu charmer. "I am an old man, Mr. Budd," he pleaded, pathetically. "My doctors tell me that I must avoid the slightest strain. I have my safe investments, and find that it disturbs me to think about shifting them."

"Yes, Sir Basil," agreed the promoter; "but this is the sort of thing that comes only a few times in a long life. Here is the one really live industry, the one that is going to shove everything out of its way. We shall make our turnover every few months—I don't want to exaggerate, but I have studied the field thoroughly, and I cannot see how we can fail to make enormous profits."

The operation of greed in this aged Greek trader's psychology was something automatic. He was like some old toper who has sworn off, but cannot resist the sight and smell of his favourite beverage; like Rip Van Winkle: "This time doesn't count!" Lanny, watching him, saw a light gleaming in the cold pale-blue eyes; the palsied fingers seemed reaching out for the treasure and the old white imperial seemed wagging with excitement.

What did he want with more money? What could he imagine himself doing with it? Here he was, with all but one or two toes in the grave, and, whatever else he might believe about the future, he couldn't expect to take Budd-Erling stock with him. Yet Zaharoff had to have more; it was the nature of his being.

Robbie had him at a disadvantage, because he knew so much about the old man's affairs: his staff, his attorneys, the advisers he trusted. Robbie had already talked to one of them, and perhaps—who could say?—promised him a *douceur*, a "sweetener." He knew how easy it would be for Zaharoff to order the sale of a million dollars' worth of bonds, and the buying of Budd-Erling preferred, with an equal number of common shares for bait. Robbie waved this bait in front of Sir Basil's prominent nose, and it followed this way and that. Lanny saw that there was going to be a "killing," and the procedure made him faintly sick, but he decided that this was sentimentality. Who would worry about the fate of an old spider, an old wolf, an old devil?

After all, Zaharoff would get real value for his money. There was really going to be this wonderful building, with a long line of objects moving along slowly and being constantly added to by parts

taken from overhead conveyors, until each in turn became recognizable as an aeroplane and finally rolled off on its own wheels, ready to mount upon the air. All this would continue, long after Sir Basil had gone to his duquesa ; as long as civilization endured, with its paper titles of ownership, his descendants would be entitled to dividend cheques payable at the First National Bank of Newcastle, Connecticut.

The upshot was that Sir Basil took a copy of Robbie's "plan" promising to study it, and if he found it according to Robbie's statements, to come in on the deal ; he wouldn't say for how much, but would let Robbie know in a couple of days. The promoter was in high spirits on the drive back to Paris. It was the best day's work he had done since the depression, he said ; you can't keep a good man down !

IX

Lanny ought to have been a true son of his father and done his share in the making of this new Budd glory. Robbie had cherished that hope for many years, but had had to give it up. He had two sons by his wife in Connecticut ; solid fellows, nearing thirty, they would be his right hand and his left. Lanny would sell a block of his securities and put the money into his father's enterprise, and then he would go back to playing the piano, advising purchasers of art works, and dreaming of seeing the world a less cruel place.

What he did now was to go for an afternoon stroll along the pleasant streets of Paris in the pleasantest season of the year. There was a visit he wanted to pay, and he wasn't going to tell his father about it. His mother, perhaps—she couldn't very well object to his visiting her brother, who had befriended her and had never done her the least harm. But with Robbie it would mean the starting of an argument, and what was the use ? Lanny wouldn't tell his wife, either, for that would mean another argument, and of even less use.

Lanny Budd, good-looking, rich, and called a darling of fortune, was a man with a secret vice ; and like many such unfortunates, having learned what other people thought of his weakness, he had evolved subtle devices to protect himself. He didn't enjoy lying, so when he stole away to practise his vice he would include in his journey some innocent occupation such as looking at pictures ; then when Irma asked him what he had been doing, he would answer : "Looking at pictures." He would learn to keep silent on all subjects that might possibly be connected with his vice and bring it to his wife's mind. What you don't know won't hurt you—such is the maxim of erring husbands.

The fact that he refused to recognize his vice for what it was made a difference to him, but, alas, it made none to Irma; and he had had to learn the lesson that if what you do brings unhappiness to someone you love, the question of vice or virtue is a mere matter of words. They had said all the words it was possible to say on the subject, and it hadn't made any difference; so now Lanny had walled off a portion of his life and mind from most of his friends, including the woman who was dearest to him.

Lanny's vice was that he liked to talk to "Reds"; he liked to meet them, and hear them discuss the state of the world and what they were proposing to do about it. Whenever he expressed his own opinion, he got into an argument with them, too, but he took that as part of the fun. He didn't mind if they denounced the system under which he enjoyed a delightful leisure; he didn't even mind if they denounced him, calling him an idler, a playboy, a parasite. He didn't mind if they got his money and then refused to pay the tribute of gratitude, saying that it wasn't really his money, he had no right to it, it belonged to the wage-slaves, the disinherited of the earth—in other words, to themselves. These things infuriated Irma, but Lanny took them all with a grin.

There was some kind of queer streak in him which Irma and her friends couldn't make out; some called it "yellow," though not often in Irma's hearing. The grandson of Budd's had somehow got fixed in his mind the notion that he wasn't entitled to his money and, worse yet, that Irma wasn't entitled to hers. It was like a thorn buried deeply in his conscience; it festered there, and no surgery had been able to extract it. This caused him to take an apologetic attitude towards disturbers of the social peace and made him their predestined victim; a soft-shell crab in an ocean full of hard-shell creatures. Irma had her own ideas about "parasites"; she thought they were the grumblers and discontents, the faddists and cranks who wrote letters to her husband and laid siege to his home, in the effort to dump their sorrows into his heart and their burdens on to his shoulders.

Irma had tried to be good-natured about these annoyances, up to the last year or two; but the episode of the Robin family had broken her patience. She blamed all the misfortunes of that family upon the doings of the Red Hansi and the Pink Freddi and the failure of the head of the family to control his wayward sons. She went further and blamed all the troubles of Europe upon the activities of the Bolsheviks. It was their threats of class war and wholesale robbery which were responsible for the development, first of Fascism in Italy and then of Nazism in Germany. When the well-to-do

classes found they could no longer sleep safely in their beds, naturally they hired someone to protect them. Hadn't Irma and Lanny themselves done it, for the safety of their "twenty-three-million-dollar baby"? Irma was quite willing to admit that Mussolini and Hitler and Göring were not the most agreeable types of people, but perhaps they were the best the well-to-do classes had been able to find in the emergency. Thus spoke, vigorously and frequently, the daughter and heiress of J. Paramount Barnes, one-time utilities king.

X

Uncle Jesse Blackless still resided in the lodgings in the working-class neighbourhood where Lanny had grown used to visiting him. The fact that he had become a deputy of the French Republic hadn't made any difference in his life—except that it might have had something to do with his decision to marry the French Communist who had been his "companion" for ten years or more. The living-room of his lodgings was still a studio, one corner of it packed solid with his paintings; he was busy doing another when Lanny knocked on the door. He had a little *gamin* for his model, and when he saw his nephew he gave the youngster a few francs and sent him along, then lighted his old pipe and settled back in his old canvas chair to "chew the rag."

They had plenty to talk about: family affairs, the news that Beauty was in Paris and that Robbie was going to become a millionaire all over again; the news about pictures, what Lanny had bought and what was to be seen in the autumn Salon; then political events, the killing of Barthou, and the chances of Laval's taking his place—Lanny told what Denis de Bruyne had said about this *fripou mongol*, and it was data that Jesse would use in his next Red tirade in the Chamber. Of course without hinting at the source of his information.

Bald, lean, and wrinkled Jesse Blackless was what is called a "character"; perhaps he was born one, but now he clung to it as a matter of principle. The income he enjoyed from the States was sufficient to have enabled him to wear a clean new smock, but he chose to be satisfied with one which revealed all the different colours he had had on his palette for several years. And it was the same with many of his habits; elegance was a sign of caste, and he chose to be one of the "workers"—although he had never worked at anything but making pictures and speeches. He chose to believe that everything the workers did was right and that everything the rich did was wrong, this being in accordance with the doctrine of economic determinism as he understood it.

Lanny hadn't been able to find many formulas which satisfied him, and it amused him to pick flaws in his Red uncle's. They would wrangle, both taking it as a sort of mental boxing-match. Jesse sounded quite fierce, but basically he was a kind-hearted man who would and frequently did give his last franc to a comrade in distress. What he wanted was a just world, and the preliminary to this was for the rich to get off the backs of the poor. Since dialectical materialism demonstrated that they wouldn't, the thing to do was to throw them off.

The funeral of Freddi Robin had been reported in both *Le Populaire* and *L'Humanité*, the former celebrating it as a Socialist event and the latter treating it as an anti-Nazi event. This provoked the painter to declare the futility of attempting to overthrow the Nazis except by Communism; which in turn made it necessary for Lanny to declare the futility of attempting to achieve the goal without the co-operation of the middle classes. Jesse said that the middle classes were being ground to pieces by the economic process, and to hell with them. Lanny said statistics showed the middle classes increasing in America, despite all Marxist formulas. And so on.

If Irma Barnes had heard her husband arguing she might have imagined that she had converted him; but no, if she had been here, he would have been driven to take the side against her. This wasn't perversity, he would insist; he was trying to see the problem from all of its many sides, and argued against all persons who wanted to see only one side. He dreamed of a just social order which might come without violence; but apparently everything in this old Europe had to be violent!

XI

The newly established mistress of this household came in, and the argument was dropped, for Françoise, hard-working party member, lacked the American sense of humour and would be annoyed by Lanny's seeming-flippant attitude to the cause which constituted her religion. Lanny chatted for a polite interval and then excused himself, saying that he had an engagement to dine with his father. He went out to walk in the pleasant streets of Paris at the most pleasant hour of sunset, and stopped in a couple of art-shops whose dealers were acquainted with him and were pleased to show him new things. This would keep his record clean—he had been “looking at pictures.”

The ladies of the *trottoir* manifested an interest in a handsome,

well-dressed, and young-looking man. In fact, walking alone on the streets of *la Ville Lumière* was no easy matter on this account. Lanny liked women; he had been brought up among them and was sorry for them all, the rich as well as the poor; he knew that nature had handicapped them, and this was no world in which to be weak or dependent. He would look at the thin pinched faces of those who sought to join him; their paint did not deceive him as to the state of their nutrition, nor their artificial smiles as to the state of their hearts. He saw their pitiful attempts at finery, and his own heart ached for the futility of these efforts at survival.

There came one, more *petite* and frail than usual, and with a manner showing traces of refinement. She put her arm in Lanny's, saying: "May I walk with you, Monsieur?" He answered: "*S'il vous plaît, Mademoiselle—vous serez mon garde du corps.*" One would keep the others away!

He took out his purse and gave her a ten-franc note, which she crammed hurriedly into her sleeve. She didn't know what he meant, but it sufficed for a start, and as they strolled along he asked her where she came from, how she lived, and how much she earned. Like so many others she was a *midinette* by day; but work was uncertain in these terrible times and one couldn't earn enough to pay for food and shelter, to say nothing of clothes. She perceived that this was a kind gentleman; and Lanny understood that if she wasn't sticking exactly to the facts, this also could be explained by the formulas of economic determinism. Anyhow, she was a woman, and the tones of her voice and the pressure of her hand on his arm told him a good deal.

Their stroll brought them to where the Rue Royale débouches on to the Place de la Concorde. Lanny said: "We have to part now. I have an engagement." She replied, this time doubtless with entire truth: "*Je suis désolée, Monsieur.*" She watched him enter the Hotel Crillon, and knew that a big fish had got away. However, the ten francs would buy her a dinner and leave enough over for a scanty breakfast.

XII

Lanny went into the hotel, in whose red-carpeted and marble-walled lobby great events had happened during the Peace Conference of fifteen years ago. For the grandson of Budd's the place would be for ever haunted by the ghosts of statesmen, diplomats, functionaries of all sorts, some in splendid uniforms, others in austere black coats. Many were now dead and buried in far corners

of the earth, but the evil they had done lived after them ; they had sowed the dragon's teeth, and already the armed men were beginning to rise out of the ground, in Italy, Germany, Japan ; in other places the ground was trembling and one saw the round tops of steel helmets breaking through. Lanny and others who thought they understood dragon agriculture predicted a bumper crop, perhaps the biggest in history.

He went to the desk for his mail. There was a letter, a poor-looking letter in a cheap envelope, not usual in this haven of the rich. But it was common enough in Lanny's life, he and his wife being targets for begging letters. This one was postmarked London and addressed to *Bienvenu*, from which place it had been forwarded ; the handwriting was foreign, apparently German, and Lanny didn't recognize it. He opened the envelope as he walked towards the *ascenseur*, and found a note and also a little sketch on a card the size of a postcard. He looked at it and saw the face of the dead Freddi Robin ; it caused him to stop in his tracks, for it was extraordinarily well done.

He glanced at the signature, "Bernhardt Monck," and did not know the name. He read :

DEAR MR. BUDD,—I have a communication which I am sure will be of interest to you. I came to England because I understood that you were here. I hope this letter will find you and I thank you kindly to reply promptly, because the circumstances of the writer are not permitting of a long wait. It is a matter not of myself but of others, as you will understand quickly.

The stranger signed himself, "Respectfully," and had put in the envelope this little password, this shibboleth or countersign, which had the power to send cold chills up and down Lanny's spine. To an art expert this simple pencil drawing, which bore not even an initial on it, was the surest means of identification and the most secret message that could be contrived. Every line of the drawing cried aloud to him : "Trudi Schultz !" The date on it, October 1934, with a black line drawn around it, said to him : "I have learned of Freddi's dying condition, and have sent a messenger to see you." The young artist Trudi had been one of the teachers at Freddi's school in Berlin, and her style was not to be mistaken.

If Lanny had been a discreet person, if he had learned thoroughly the lessons which life was apparently trying to teach him, he would have put this little drawing away in a portfolio with other art

treasures, including a sketch of himself by Jacovleff and several by John Sargent ; as for the letter, he would have torn it into small pieces and sent them down into those sewers of Paris which have been so vividly described in *Les Misérables*. He thought of these prudent actions, to be sure ; he thought of his wife and what she would make of this situation. He argued with her in his mind. He hadn't promised her that he would never have anything more to do with Reds or Pinks ; he hadn't said that he wouldn't receive any more messages from Germany or give any more thought to the struggle against the Nazis. All he had said was : " I will never again get into trouble with the Nazis, or cause you unhappiness because of my anti-Nazi activities." Surely it couldn't do harm if he saw a messenger from a young artist of talent and found out what had happened to her, and to her husband, and to the other friends of himself and Freddi Robin in Germany.

So the toper says to himself : " I am reformed now ; everything is settled and safe ; I will never again touch liquor in any form ; but of course a glass of beer now and then, or a little light wine at meal-times, cannot do me any harm ! "

Lanny had the sketch framed and carefully packed, and sent it by registered mail to Mme. Rahel Robin, Juan-les-Pins, Alpes-Maritimes. Also he wrote a note on the stationery of the Hotel Crillon to the mysterious Mr. Bernhardt Monck, stating that he expected to be in London in two or three days and would get in touch with him. Without mentioning the matter, he enclosed a one-pound banknote with the letter, thus making sure that Mr. Monck wouldn't perish of starvation in the meantime.

3

A Young Man Married

I

BIDDING temporary farewell to his parents, Lanny Budd set out early on a damp and chilly morning to motor to England. Not far off the route lay the Château les Forêts, home of Emily Chattersworth, and he detoured to pay a duty call on her. This old friend of the family was not so well or so happy ; the leading art critic who had been her *ami* for a quarter of a century had decided that

a younger woman was necessary to his welfare, and when that happens the older woman does not find joy in even the finest landed estate. Emily had stood by Beauty Budd when her son was born out of wedlock, and she had been a sort of informal godmother to Lanny; having helped to make his match with a famous heiress, she was always interested to hear how it was coming along. After the fashion of this free and easy world of wealthy expatriates, she discussed the troubles of her heart with the young man, and he kept no secrets from her.

There was news to be exchanged concerning the people they knew and what they were doing. Lanny told about Freddi's funeral, and about Lady Caillard's "coming through," and about the success of the concert tour which Hansi Robin and Lanny's half-sister Bess were making in the Argentine. He told about the Salon at which he had spent the previous day, and described a painting he had bought for one of his clients. Emily wanted to know about Robbie's affairs, and he advised her: "Keep away from him; he's in one of his high-pressure moods." That always awakens the curiosity of the rich—they are used to being run after and are impressed when they are run from. Emily talked about the state of the market, and said it was shocking the way her income had fallen off; however, she couldn't bear to think of changing her investments while the prices of all her holdings were so low. Lanny said there was no use remembering that they had ever been higher.

She really wanted to hear about Robbie's project, so Lanny reported on it. He perceived that a white-haired chatelaine was a victim of the same tropism as an aged Levantine trader; he teased her about it, and she made the answer which the rich always make—they have so many taxes, so many dependents, such a variety of expenses which cannot be cut down; whatever their income, they are always "strapped." Lanny said: "You know I'm no promoter, but it looks as if Robbie's going to make a lot of money." Emily responded: "Do you suppose he'll come out to see me if I phone him?"

II

On to Calais, the town full of memories never to be erased; it was there that Lanny had waited for the Robin family to arrive on their yacht, and had learned that the Nazis had seized them. He drove his car on to the packet-boat, and paced the deck watching the busy stretch of water which he had crossed with Marie de Bruyne, then with Rosemary, Countess of Sandhaven, and of late with Irma Barnes; he thought of each in turn, experiencing those

delicate thrills which accompany the recollection of happy loves. Here, too, he had crossed with his father in war-time, through a lane made by two lines of steel nets held up by buoys, with destroyers patrolling them day and night. People of Lanny's sort now spent much time discussing the question whether such things were likely to be seen again, and if so, how soon.

There were no fields of clover when Lanny went up from Dover. The green was beginning to fade from the landscapes, and a soft drizzling rain veiled every scene, making it look like an old painting whose varnish has turned brown. Lanny enjoyed this season of mist and mellow fruitfulness, and observed with the eyes of an art connoisseur the thatched cottages and mouldy-looking roofs, the hedges, the winding roads—but watch your reactions, for it's tricky when you drive one-half the day on the right and the other half on the left! He by-passed London bound for Oxfordshire and home; he had wired Irma, and Mr. or "Comrade" Monck would have to wait a day or two longer.

They were living in a villa which Irma had rented from the Honourable Evelina Fontenoy, aunt of Lord Wickthorpe. It was called "small," but was large, also modern and comfortable, in contrast to Wickthorpe Castle, whose estate it adjoined. It had a high hedge for privacy, and very lovely lawns; the drive made a turn when it entered, so that passers-by couldn't see the house at all. When Lanny came up the drive at twilight he heard a shout, and here came a small figure with brown hair streaming—little Frances, dressed in a raincoat and overshoes, and let out in care of a groom to await the arrival of that wonderful father, almost as rare as Santa Claus. He stopped the car and she clambered in beside him, to drive a hundred feet or so; there was a present for her in the seat, but she mustn't unwrap it until she got her wet things off.

The "twenty-three-million-dollar baby" so much publicized by the newspapers, was now four and a half years old, and wise care had averted most of the evils which might have been predicted for one in her position. She hadn't been kidnapped, and hadn't been too badly spoiled, in spite of two rival grandmothers. A trained scientist had had the final say about her, and had said it with effect. Frances Barnes Budd was a fine sturdy child, and was going to grow up a young Juno like her mother. She had been taught to do things for herself, and nobody had been permitted to tell her that she would some day be abnormally wealthy.

Irma came to the head of the stairs when she heard the child's excited cries. Lanny ran up, two steps at a time, and they embraced; they were in love with each other, and a week's absence seemed

long. She wore an embroidered red silk kimono in honour of his coming—her blooming brunette beauty could stand such adornment. She led him into her sitting-room, and the child took a perch upon his knee and unwrapped his present, a picture book with pastel drawings of that gaiety which the French achieve by instinct. She wanted it read to her right away, but Irma said that she and Lanny had much to talk about, and sent the little one off to the governess, whose accomplishments included French.

Then they were alone, and there was the light of welcome in Irma's eyes, and they were happy together, as they had been so many times, and might be for ever, if only he would let it happen. At least, so it seemed to Irma; but even while she still lay in his arms, fear crept into her soul like a cloud over a blue sky. She whispered: "Oh, Lanny, do let us be happy for a while!" He answered: "Yes, darling, I have promised."

But his tone meant that the cloud was still there. When lovers have had a clash of wills and unkind words have been spoken, these words are not forgotten; they sink into the back of the mind and stay there, having a secret life of their own, generating fear and doubt. Especially is this so when the cause of the disagreement had not been removed; when the clash of wills is fundamental, a difference of temperaments. The lovers may try to deny it, they may cry out against it, but the difference goes on working in their hearts.

A duel carried on in secrecy and darkness! Lanny thought: "She is trying to put chains upon me; she has no right to do it." Irma thought: "He will think I am trying to put chains upon him; he has no right to think that." But then, in her fear, she thought: "Oh, I must not let him get that idea!" Lanny, in his love, thought: "I must not let her know that I think that! I have caused her too much unhappiness already." So it went, back and forth, and each watched for the signs of stress in the other, and suspected them where they were not actually present, resenting them even while resolving not to cause them. So it is when a ray of light is caught between two almost parallel mirrors and is reflected back and forth an endless number of times, or when a wave of sound is thrown into a tangle of rocky hills and echoes are set rolling back and forth as if evil spirits were mocking the source of the sound.

III

Lanny talked about his trip. Not much about the funeral, for Irma wanted to forget all that as quickly as she could. But she was interested in Robbie and his project, and in the visit of Zaharoff

and its outcome. She said: "Lanny, that ought to prove a big thing."

"I believe it will," he replied.

"Doesn't Robbie want me to come in on it?"

"You know how he is—he's shy about putting it up to you."

"But that's silly. If he has a good thing, why shouldn't I have a chance at it?"

"Well, he said he wouldn't mention it unless you asked him to."

"He ought to know that I have confidence in him, and that it's a family matter. I would be hurt if he left me out."

"I'll tell him," said Lanny; and so that was settled most agreeably. Would that it had all been as easy!

"I'm glad you got home early," remarked Irma. "Wickthorpe is having the Albanys to dinner and asked us over in the evening. I said we would come if you got back."

"Fine," replied the husband. "And by the way, would you like to run up to town with me to-morrow? I have a letter from a man in Ohio, asking if I can find him a good Sir Joshua. I think I know where there's one."

What the art expert had said was true; he was determined never to lie to his wife. If Irma had asked: "Did you see Uncle Jesse?" he would have answered "Yes" and told her what they had talked about. But she didn't ask; she knew that she didn't have the right to expect him not to meet Beauty's brother. He, for his part, knew that she must have known that he would go there, and perhaps meet other Reds, and perhaps make them promises of the sort they always tried to get from him. They would unsettle his thoughts, make him discontented with his life, cause him to be moody and to make sarcastic remarks to his wife's friends. The wild echoes were set flying in their hearts again; but neither spoke of them.

IV

Gerald Albany was a colleague of Lord Wickthorpe in the British Foreign Office; they had been through Winchester together and were close friends. Albany was the son of a country clergyman and had to make his own way; perhaps for that reason he was more proper and reticent than other members of the diplomatic set whom Lanny had met. He was a tall lean man with a long serious face, and had found a wife who matched him perfectly, a large-boned lady wearing a dark-blue evening costume which was doubtless expensive but looked extremely plain. The half-starved little *fille*

de joie with whom Lanny had strolled on the boulevards had more *chic* than Vera Albany could ever have or perhaps wish to have.

The husband was a carefully studied model of a British diplomat, cold in manner and precise in utterance ; yet, when you knew him, you discovered that he was a sentimental person, something of a mystic, knowing long stretches of Wordsworth by heart—he had even read the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, not once, but many times, and was prepared to defend them as poetry. He was conservative in his opinions, but tried hard to be open-minded or at least to believe that he was ; he would permit Lanny to voice the most unorthodox ideas, and discuss them in such a carefully tolerant way, with so much suavity, that unless you knew his type of mind you might think he half agreed with you. Yes, of course, we are all Socialists now ; we are enlightened men and we understand that the world is changing. The ruling classes must be prepared to give way and permit the people to have a larger say about their affairs ; but not in India or Central Africa, in Hong Kong or Singapore. Above all, not in too much of a hurry ; right now only the Conservatives understand the situation and are able to guide the ship of state in perilous seas !

Irma was deeply impressed by this conscientious functionary, and wished that her husband might be ; she tried in a way which she thought was tactful to bring this about. But Lanny, the impatient one, thought that the world ought to be changed right away. He said that the difference between a Bolshevik and a Tory was mainly one of timing ; the toughest old die-hard in the Carlton Club could be got to admit that maybe in a few thousand years from now the dark-skinned races might be sufficiently educated to manage their own affairs both political and industrial. But, meanwhile, we have to carry the white man's burden, placed upon our shoulders by that God of our fathers so intimately known of old.



Lanny had been on a scouting expedition, as it were. His friends were pleased to hear what a French financier thought about political prospects in his country and what an ex-munitions king, a Knight Commander of the Bath, had to say about the state of Europe. Pierre Laval had just become Foreign Minister of France, and Lanny told what he had heard about him ; speaking in the privacy of the home, the Englishmen agreed that he was an unscrupulous and undependable fellow. That was the difficulty in relations with

France ; the governments changed so rapidly, and policies changed with them ; you could never be sure where you stood. British foreign policy, on the other hand, changed very slowly ; in fundamentals it never changed at all. Britain had a Prime Minister who was a Socialist, yet everything remained as it had been. Politicians may come and politicians may go but the old school tie goes on for ever.

These friends knew all about Lanny's misadventures in Germany and made allowances for his extreme views on the subject of Nazism. But they were not prepared to change the fixed bases of their empire's policy because an American playboy with a pinkish tinge to his mind had got thrown into the dungeons of the Gestapo—nor yet because a family of wealthy German Jews had been blackmailed and plundered. Wickthorpe was prepared to admit that the Nazis were tough customers ; an irruption from the gutter, he called them ; but they were the government of Germany, *de facto* and *de jure*, and one had to deal with them. They might be made to serve very useful purposes ; for one thing, as a counterweight to French political upstarts who had a tendency to become extremely arrogant, on account of their country's great store of gold ; and for a second thing, as a check upon Russia. " Oh, yes ! " exclaimed Lanny. " Hitler is to put down the Bolsheviks for you ! "

Wherever an American art expert travelled, in Europe, in England, in America, he found the privileged classes, his own kind of people, hypnotized by the Führer's flaming denunciations of Communism and the Red Menace. The ex-painter of postcards voiced their thoughts completely on this subject ; he was their man and promised to do their job. In vain Lanny tried to make them realize that no slogan meant anything to Hitler, except the gaining and keeping of power ; political opinions were an arsenal of weapons from which he picked up those which served his need at a certain moment of conflict. When conscientious, God-fearing English gentlemen stood upon a platform and made promises to their electorate, they meant at least part of what they said ; and how could they imagine that Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels would change their entire " line " overnight if it suited their political or military purposes ?

Lanny was frightened about it, and sad about the state of opinion in all the countries he knew. But there is a limit to the amount of arguing and protesting you can do in the drawing-room of even your best friends ; if you keep it up, they will stop inviting you ; and long before that happens, your wife will be pointing out to you that you are making yourself socially impossible. Lanny, well

trained from childhood and now provided with a thoroughly competent wife, had to sit and listen while Lord Wickthorpe proceeded to "adumbrate"—so he said—the future of world history in accord with the best interests of the British Empire. "Good God, man, don't you suppose that Hitler knows what you are expecting? And why should he oblige you?"—so Lanny wanted to cry out; but he knew that if he did he would get a scolding on his way home.

VI

The master of this ancient chilly castle, a sight for tourists and a home for bats, was slightly older than Lanny, but, like Lanny, appeared younger than his age. He had pink cheeks, fair wavy hair, and a tiny pale-brown moustache; how he had managed to remain a bachelor had been a mystery to Irma since the first day she had met him at the Lausanne Conference. He had elegant manners and an assured mode of speech. His was a civil service job, and he had had to pass very stiff examinations, so he knew what to do and say in every eventuality. He would listen courteously to what you had to report, and then, if he thought it worth while, would explain to you where you were mistaken. If he didn't think it worth while, he would turn and talk to someone else.

Irma thought him one of the best-informed men she had ever met, and sometimes she cited him to her husband as an authority. Irma loved the romantic grey-stone castle, in spite of its portable bathtubs which she called "tin." She loved the respectful tenants who always tipped their hats to her if they were men and "bobbed" if they were women. She liked English reserve, as contrasted with French volubility. She liked living in a world where all the people knew their places and everything had been happening just so for hundreds of years. She wished that Lanny could be dignified, instead of bohemian, meeting all sorts of riffraff, rubbing elbows with "radicals" in smoke-filled cafés and letting them argue with and even ridicule him.

In short, Irma liked a world without confusion whether domestic or intellectual. She had seen, first in Russia and then in Germany, that if you played with dangerous ideas you presently began to witness dangerous actions. She thought that Lanny was old enough to have sowed his cultural wild oats, and she yearned for him to settle down and take care of her and her fortune and her child. She found in Lord Wickthorpe the perfect model of what she would like her husband to be; and while she was too tactful to put it in

plain words, Lanny could gather it without difficulty. He wasn't in the least jealous, but he couldn't help thinking now and then how pleasant it would be if his wife could agree with him about the things he considered important. His effort to keep his annoying thoughts to himself was resulting in a sort of split personality, and as time passed the hidden part of him was becoming the larger and more active.

VII

Emily Chattersworth had persuaded Irma that it was important for her to take a serious interest in her husband's occupation and to let him have the manly sensation of earning his own money, however small the amount. So Irma would go with him to look at old masters and would gravely offer her opinion upon their merits and prices. She wanted to be cultured, and this was a part of it. Many of the paintings really were beautiful, and now and then when Lanny came upon a bargain Irma would buy it herself and have it stored until the time when she had her own palace, either in England or France, she wasn't sure which.

Sir Joshua was an especially interesting master, because he had done so many beautiful aristocratic ladies and their children. Irma herself was such a lady, and Lanny had told her that he was looking for the right man to do a life-size portrait of her. So now she saw herself in these duchesses and countesses, and studied poses and costumes, in order that when the time came she would be able to tell the artist exactly what she wanted. That is the way to meet life, she had decided: know how to spend your money, say what is your pleasure, and hold the respect of those you deal with, from the humblest slavey who brings in your coal-scuttle to the proudest nobleman who invites you to grace his drawing-room.

Lanny was conscientious about serving his clients. When the owner of a ball-bearings plant in Ohio wrote that he wanted a good Sir Joshua for his collection, Lanny didn't pick up the first one the fashionable dealers offered; he didn't say: "That fellow has so much money it doesn't matter what he pays." No, he would consult his card-file and list all the Sir Joshuas of which he had been able to learn; he would get photographs of each, and send them to his client, with a long letter detailing the qualities of each and discussing the possible prices.

"I advise you to let the matter rest for a few weeks," he would write, "until word has got round about the inquiries I have made. You understand that the market for old masters is a small world,

full of busy and eager traders, and they gossip among themselves like a hive of bees. They regard Americans as their proper prey, and invariably ask fifty per cent. more than they would ask of an Englishman. I have succeeded in impressing them with the view that I am not an easy mark; I worry them with the idea that my client prefers some other picture, and usually in a few days they call up and invite me to dicker, and try to get me to set a price, which I refuse to do until I hear from some other dealer on some other picture. All this is very sordid, but it's the way paintings are bought, and there's no use letting yourself be plucked."

Such a letter would impress the manufacturer, for it was the way he would proceed when placing an order for steel ingots. When he got his painting at last he would appreciate it much more because he had had to worry about it. He would say to his friends: "That chap Lanny Budd got it for me—you know, Budd Gun-makers; he's married to Irma Barnes, the heiress, so it's really a labour of love with him." The arrival of the painting would be celebrated in the local newspapers, and not merely would the painting be reproduced, but also a photograph of the proud owner; so the other steel men of the district would learn that art pays, and the wife of one of them would get Lanny's address and inquire if there was anything really first class now on the market. Lanny would get his ten per cent. out of all this, and it provided him with pocket money and made an amusing sort of life.

VIII

After Irma had looked at several paintings she always got tired, and remembered various things which ladies have to do when they visit a great city: hairdressers, manicurists, masseuses, milliners, dressmakers, furriers, jewellers—all sorts of shrewd purveyors who are busy day and night thinking up schemes to persuade them that it is impossible to live worthily and romantically without such services. After lunch Irma said: "I want to go to So-and-so's," and they made an appointment for later in the afternoon to have tea and dance for a while. Lanny, having known that this would happen, had telegraphed Mr. or "Comrade" Monck at what hour he would call upon him, in a very poor neighbourhood in Limehouse, near the docks. Here were rows and rows of two-storey slum dwellings, laid end to end and exactly alike, each with its two chimneys emitting wisps of soft-coal smoke. With the help of

hundreds of factory chimneys they formed a pall which had enveloped the district for a hundred years and brought it to the appearance of a vast dustbin.

In such a neighbourhood a fancy sports-car would be a phenomenon ; so Lanny, taught by his experience in Germany, spotted the house and then drove around the corner and parked. When he knocked on the door there came a slattern old woman, in features and voice completely Cockney. When he asked for Mr. Monck she said : " Ow, yuss," and as she led him up the narrow stairs she said it was a nice dye, sir ; he was quite sure that, whatever Nazi or anti-Nazi plotting might be going on here, the lydy of the 'ouse 'ad nuffin to do wiv it. Lanny hadn't failed to consider the possibility that he might be dealing with the Gestapo ; they might have got Trudi Schultz in their clutches and be using one of her sketches as a means of trapping her friends and getting information. He had read of their kidnapping persons from Austria and Switzerland ; the brother of Gregor Strasser had been one of their near-victims ; but he didn't think it likely they would go that far in London—not quite yet !

The woman, grumbling about her rheumatism, didn't really have to climb the stairs and knock on the door of the rear room ; Lanny guessed that she was curious about her foreign lodger and the " toff " who had come to see him. A man inside answered the knock, took one glance, and said quickly : "*Bitte, keinen Namen !*" Lanny said not a word, but stepped in. The lodger shut the door in the landlady's face and carefully hung a coat over the knob so as to cover the keyhole ; he signed Lanny to the sole chair in the small and dingy room, and said, in a low voice : "*Besser wir sprechen Deutsch.*"

Lanny had been imagining some sort of " intellectual," but a single glance told him that this was an outdoor man, used to hard and tough labour. His frame was stocky and filled out like a boxer's, and his neck went up straight and solid in the back. His face was weatherbeaten, his hands gnarled ; his clothes were those of a labourer and his dark hair was cropped short in Prussian style. Lanny thought : " A sailor or perhaps a longshoreman." He had met the type among the Socialists in Bremen as well as on the Riviera : the man who has laboured by day and read at night. His education is narrow, but he has forged it into a sharp sword for his purposes. He knows what he wants, and his speech is direct. If he is middle-aged, he is probably a Socialist ; if he is young, he is more likely to be a Communist.

IX

The stranger seated himself on the edge of the narrow bed, not more than three feet from Lanny, and, gazing straight into his face, began, in a voice with a strong North German accent : " The name I gave you is not my real name, so there is no harm in your speaking it ; but I will try not to speak your name, and let us not name any of our friends or any places. There are, you understand, extremely important reasons."

" Have you reason to believe that you are being watched here ? " inquired the visitor, speaking low, as the other had done.

" I have to assume it always. That is the only way to survive. I sent you something in the way of credentials. Did you recognize it ? "

" I believe I did," replied Lanny.

" Let us refer to the woman in the case as Frau Mueller. Let that be for both speaking and writing in the future."

Lanny nodded. He thought : " A miller instead of a village magistrate," that being the meaning of the name Schultz.

The stranger continued : " Frau Mueller and I are associated with others in some work of the utmost importance, and we have one rule, we do not reveal anything about it except in case of absolute necessity. I hope that you will not question me too much, and will not take offence if I say : I cannot answer this or that. It is not merely our own lives that are at stake."

" I understand," replied Lanny.

" We do not under any circumstances name any other person. I know the names of those with whom I deal, she knows the names of those with whom she deals, but I do not know her associates, and so on. We keep nothing in writing, anywhere. So, if we are captured, our enemies have only us ; and even if they torture us, and we should break down and wish to betray others, we cannot do much."

" I understand," responded Lanny, again.

" It is my hope that you will trust me on the basis of what you know about Frau Mueller, who gave me your name and sent me to you. She has told me about you, and assured me that you are a comrade and a man of honour ; also that you have had experiences which enable you to know what our enemies are and how serious a matter it is to us if we are betrayed or even talked about in a careless way. I ask that you will not mention this meeting to anyone under any circumstances. May I count upon that ? "

"You may do so. Of course I can't say how far I might go along with you."

"We need friends outside our own country, and we hope that you will help us and perhaps find others to help us. We can accomplish very important work if we can get help. We represent a people's movement, for the deliverance of our people from a slavery which is intolerable to them and at the same time is a deadly danger to the outside world. I take it you agree with that, and do not require any proofs or discussion."

"Quite so, Herr Monck."

"You know what Frau Mueller was in the old days. I was the same and still am. Secrecy and intrigue are not of our choice; they are forced upon us by brutal tyranny. Our work is educational; we are not terrorists, and are determined not to become such under any circumstances. A great civilized people is being blindfolded, and we are trying to strip the bandages from their eyes. We take that as our duty, and are willing if need be to give our lives, and to risk torture in order to do it. What methods we are using to spread information is our secret, and we are sure you will understand that we do not speak any unnecessary word about them."

"I understand everything that you say."

"You know Frau Mueller and trust her as a comrade. There are reasons why she could not come. My position is such that I can enter and leave the country, and so I am serving as her messenger. I hope you will accept me as you would accept her."

Lanny had been studying the face so close to his own, weighing every tone of the voice and trying to make up his mind concerning the personality behind them. He said: "It will be necessary for us to speak with entire frankness, now and in our future dealings, if we are to have any."

"Quite so, Herr—what shall I say?"

"Schmidt," suggested Lanny—adding one more occupation to the miller and the village magistrate.

"*Einverstandten. Herr Schmidt.*"

"The woman you speak of is one I would trust without question. But I cannot forget the possibility that cunning enemies might have seized her and her papers, and might have sent one of their well-trained agents to me, knowing exactly how to pose as a member of her group."

"You are entirely right, and I expect you to question me and do whatever you find necessary to satisfy yourself. But if I prefer not to answer some questions, do not take it as a sign of guilt. If I were an agent of the enemy, I would answer freely."

WIDE IS THE GATE

Lanny couldn't help smiling. "An enemy might be more subtle," he remarked.

X

The grandson of Budd's didn't fail to realize that this was an important moment in his life. He had been expecting something like this ever since he had come out of Germany, and he had thought hard about how he was going to meet it. Now he said: "There are many things already known to me about Frau Mueller, and if you possess detailed knowledge about these, it will help to convince me that you really know her well and are her friend."

"I will tell you all that I can think of," replied the stranger. Speaking slowly and carefully, like one searching his memory, he began: "Frau Mueller is what is called a blonde Aryan. She is, I should say, under thirty, and rather tall for a woman. Her voice is deep in tone. I have only known her about a year, and do not know how she used to look, but she is now thin and pale; her features are extremely delicate and you feel that she is a consecrated person. She has a strong sense of duty, and lays more stress upon personal qualities than most Marxists do. She has fair hair, rather wavy—naturally so, for she concerns herself very little with her appearance. She draws quickly and with accuracy; since I know nothing about art, I can only wonder at it. Also I might mention that she has a strawberry mark just above her right knee."

"I am sorry, I do not know her well enough to confirm that." Again Lanny couldn't keep from smiling.

The other replied gravely: "Last summer her friends perceived that she was working and worrying too hard, and would persuade her to go to one of the lakes for a few days, and go in swimming; that is how I came to see the mark. She is utterly devoted to the memory of her husband and clings stubbornly to the idea that he is still alive and that she will some day help to set him free."

"You have not been able to find out about him?"

"No one has heard a word since he was taken away. 'We' are all sure that he was murdered and secretly disposed of."

"You might tell me about his arrest, if you can."

"He was arrested with the young relative of yours, the Jew who played the clarinet and who had come to the Mueller home because of sudden illness—he had eaten some food which must have poisoned him. Frau Mueller went out to do some marketing, and when she returned she found that the home had been raided and her husband and your relative had been taken away."

"That is in accord with what she told me. Let me ask, did she tell you about her last meeting with me?"

"She was coming out of a tailor-shop carrying a bundle of clothing, when you came up to her and insisted on recognizing her in spite of her not wishing to be known. You told her that your relative was in Dachau and promised to try to find out whether her husband was there also. But she never heard from you."

"Did she tell you how she expected to communicate with me?"

"You were to come to a certain street corner, and she went there at noon every Sunday for quite a while, but you did not appear."

"Did she say I gave her anything?"

"You gave her six one-hundred-mark notes, and she wishes you to know that they were turned over to the group and used for our work."

"I never had any doubts about that," replied the American. "That is all convincing, Herr Monck; and now tell me what you wish me to do."

"We need more of those notes, Herr Schmidt. You understand that in the old days the workers' movements were strong because they could collect dues from millions of members; but now our group is small, and every time we make a new contact we risk our lives. It is hard for workers in our country now to earn enough to buy food, to say nothing of saving anything for literature. We must have help from comrades abroad, and it is the hope of Frau Meuller that you will consent to act as our collection agency."

Lanny hadn't needed to ask his last question; he had known what was coming, and his conscience had begun to ache, as it had done many times before. People expected so much of Mr. Irma Barnes, who drove expensive cars, dressed in the height of fashion, and lived in elegant villas in the most delightful parts of the earth!

Doubtless Comrade Monck also knew what was going on in that well-shaped and well-cared-for head. He went on quickly: "We have a cause, for which we are risking not merely death, but the most cruel torture which fiends in human form have been able to devise. It is not merely our cause, but yours; for if these fiends whom you know well are able to turn the resources of the country to armaments, you will be in just as great danger as we. Therefore we have a right to claim the support of decent and right-thinking men. I have taken a long and dangerous journey here and I do not feel embarrassed to put it up to you. I am not a beggar, I am a comrade, and I present it as a matter of honour, of duty, which a man cannot refuse without shame. You have seen innocent blood shed, and the blood of your murdered friend calls out to you—not

for vengeance, but for justice, for the truth to be spoken, for a long and hard and dangerous job of truth-telling to be done."

XI

There it was : a voice from outside Lanny Budd, speaking the same words which his inner voice had been speaking day and night, haunting him and tormenting him, not letting him rest even in the most fashionable society, even in the arms of the ardent young Juno who influenced him so deeply. It was a commanding voice, and he thought : " If this rough working-man is an agent of the Gestapo, they certainly have a first-class school of elocution and dramatics ! "

Poor Lanny ! He had to begin the " spiel " which he had repeated so many times that he had got tired of hearing himself. " Genosse Monck, I don't know whether Tru—that is, Frau Mueller realizes it or not, but my money resources are not what people think. I have to earn what I spend ; and while I spend a good deal, it is because I earn my money from the rich, and there is no way to go among them unless you live as they do. I have a wealthy wife, but I do not have the spending of her money ; she does not share my political beliefs, and it is a matter of pride with me to keep my independence.

" I accept what you say, Genosse ; but I cannot have any pride, because I am a hunted man, and I have not only my own fears, but those of millions of working people, whose need is so great that no one can exaggerate it. I am not using wild words, but telling you the plain truth when I say that to take my country out of the hands of the bandits is the most important cause in all the world to-day. Nothing else matters ; literature, art, civilization itself—everything is gone if we fail. Surely what you have been through and seen must make it impossible for you to escape that truth ! "

" How do you know what I have seen ? " asked Lanny, with sudden curiosity.

" That is one of the questions I ought not to answer. People wear masks in my country to-day, and they speak in whispers, but these whispers keep going all the time, and news spreads with great speed. That is why a few pieces of flimsy paper, which cost so little in money, can do such a tremendous work ; they can start a fire which will never be put out. Believe me, I know the state of mind of our workers, and what can be done. Give us what money you can spare, and go out and help raise more for us."

" I have many rich friends "—Lanny was continuing his " spiel "

—"but few who would put up money for the cause we are talking about. I fear that what I give you I shall first have to earn."

"Do what you can—that is all we ask. We balance our lives against your time."

"This is what I will do," said Lanny. "I will give you five hundred dollars to-day—it is all I can spare at the moment; but I will give you a thousand or two now and then, as I am able to earn it by selling pictures. I ask only one condition as to future amounts: I shall have to see your friend Frau Mueller and hear her tell me that this is what she wishes me to do."

"That will be very hard to arrange, Genosse."

"Not so hard, I believe. I am willing to come to your country. An hour ago I would have said that nothing could induce me to re-enter it; but I will come for the sake of this work."

"Will you be permitted to enter?"

"I feel quite sure there will be no interference with my movements. I have my business, which is *bevorzugt*—it brings foreign exchange to your country. I have been careful to preserve my status, and I know important and influential persons. Let me add this: I am keeping your secrets, and I expect you to keep mine. You may tell Frau Mueller about me, but no one else."

"I would not think of doing otherwise."

"*Sehr gut, abgemacht!* Let Frau Mueller write me a little note, in her handwriting, which I think I know, and signed 'Mueller.' Let her set a time, day or night, to be at the place where she was previously to meet me. I remember it well and have no doubt that she does. Tell her to set it a week ahead, which will give me time to make my plans and arrive there. You may assure her that I will take every precaution and make certain that no one is following me. She does not have to walk or drive with me, if she thinks it unwise; it will suffice if I see her clearly, to be sure of her identity, and hear her voice say two words: 'Trust Monck.' Surely that is not an excessive demand."

"*Das wird sich tun lassen!*" declared the visitor, with decision. "And let me add, Herr Schmidt, that I admire your way of doing business."

XII

So here was Lanny "putting his foot in it" again; indulging that vice, displaying that weakness which was the despair of his three families; that inability to say No to persons who prated about "social justice" and promised compensation to the poor at the

expense of the rich. What did Lanny really know about this tough-looking customer? He used the language of revolutionary idealism with genuine-seeming eloquence; but what did that mean? The British Museum contained thousands of books filled with such language, and any day you might see bespectacled individuals, drably dressed and in need of haircuts, poring over these volumes, storing these ideas in their minds. They were repeated in thousands of pamphlets which might be bought for a few pence at bookstalls in working-class districts. Anybody could learn this lingo—just as anybody could learn to make explosives and to construct bombs!

Lanny argued the question with his wife and his mother—a silent, mental argument as he drove away from the rendezvous in Limehouse. Lanny wasn't at all sure of his own position, and was exposed to the assaults of these two persons and others who had claims upon him: Irma's mother, Emily Chattersworth, Sophie, Margy, all the other fashionable friends. "Why on earth should you give your trust to this man?" they would demand. "He says he isn't a terrorist; but what a small lie that would seem to him if he was! You say that Trudi Schultz is a Socialist; but a year and several months have passed since you saw her, and how do you know she hasn't changed under the stress of persecution? You say you wouldn't die of grief if they made a bomb and killed Hitler; but would you be prepared to have the Gestapo wring the truth out of them, and have the newspapers of the whole world publish the story that the grandson of Budd Gunmakers, otherwise known as Mr. Irma Barnes, had put up the money for the bomb? And what do you think will be our feelings when we are named as the mother, the wife, the mother-in-law, the friend, of this starry-eyed comrade of assassins? Have the rich no rights that a young Pink is bound to respect?"

Thus the ladies who surrounded Lanny; and then the men, better informed as to politics, would take up the argument. "Even granting that this powerful self-educated sailor or roustabout who calls himself your '*Genosse*,' your devoted comrade in Socialism, is really what you believe, what then? Maybe he will be the Ebert of the coming revolution; but again, maybe he'll be the Kerensky—the Socialist lawyer who took power in Russia, but couldn't hold it and was ousted by the Bolsheviks. Are you prepared to see that pattern repeated in Germany? If so, let us know, so that we may understand what sort of son, or half-brother, or in-law we have got!"

All this clamour, this tumult in Lanny's mind while he drove to the fashionable hotel where he had stayed on various occasions. It was after banking-hours, but the hotel management knew that

his cheque was good and had no hesitation in handing him out ten ten-pound and two one-pound banknotes. From there he went to a near-by establishment which offered European and American currencies at a slight discount, and changed the notes for twelve one-hundred-mark and five ten-mark notes. With these rolled up and safely stowed in his breast-pocket he went for a stroll along the Strand, where presently he was approached by a roughly dressed working-man who walked by his side and might have been saying: "Please, Mister, will yer give a poor bloke tuppence for a bite to eat?"—but he wasn't. Lanny slipped him something which might have been a packet of cigarettes, but wasn't. Genosse Monck presumably set out for Germany, and Lanny set out for the nearest art dealer's, so that he would be able to say to his wife with perfect truth: "Well, I saw another Sir Joshua, and it can be bought for something less than ten thousand pounds."

4

When Duty Whispers

THE day after Lanny's return from London he drove to the home of the Pomeroy-Nielsons to tell a lame ex-aviator as much as he was free to tell about his plans and his uncertainties. The Reaches, as the place was called, was on the Thames River, a small stream at an early stage of its career, but good for swimming and punting, and for barges on the other side where there was a path. The Pomeroy-Nielson home was old, and built of red brick, added to through the years, with many gables and dormer windows and one battery after another of chimney-pots. Even so it was chilly, and American visitors shivered from early autumn to late spring. Lanny, having been raised in Europe, didn't mind.

The head of the household was Sir Alfred, a crotchety but sociable old baronet with white hair, and moustaches still dark, who had difficulty in paying his debts but was happy collecting materials on the twentieth-century English drama. (This, he said, was something everybody else would overlook until it was too late.). His children had gone out into the world, all except the eldest son, whose family lived in his parents' home; an arrangement not

always successful, but this was a big rambling place, difficult to keep up, and Rick's mother, who wasn't well, leaned more and more on his wife for help in carrying the burden. The crippled son had had his parents' support through the years while he was struggling to be a writer, and now that he had made good as a dramatist he helped pay the family debts and tried to keep his father from spending more than he would ever have.

Another day of mist and light rain, and Lanny sat in his friend's study in front of one of those delightful fires such as they have in English grates, made of chunks of soft coal which sputter and emit oily juices and burn with large varicoloured flames. The door was shut, and there was no chance of spies in this Englishman's castle, but even so, Lanny spoke low, because it was becoming an instinct. "Rick," he said, "I've got a contact with the underground movement in Germany."

"Indeed?" said his friend, his interest awakened at once. "Tell me about it."

"I had to give my word not to reveal any details. It's a message from some of the people I used to know there; you can guess if you choose. They want money, of course."

"Are you sure it's the real thing?"

"Pretty nearly; but I mean to make absolutely sure before I give much. I think I'll be going into Germany."

"The devil you do!" exclaimed his friend; then right away: "What's Irma going to make of that?"

"It'll have to be on some picture deal; or maybe you could ask me to get some material for an article."

"Look here, Lanny, you're not going to find it so pleasant living a double life."

"I know, but there're a lot of unpleasant things going on. I can't turn those comrades down flat, can I? After all it's our fight, too."

"Irma's bound to find out about it; and she'll raise bally hell."

"I know; but I'll try to spare her as long as I can."

A smile broke over the older man's face. How characteristic of Lanny—trying to spare Irma, not himself! Being an Englishman, Rick wouldn't say all that he felt, but his heart ached for this friend of his boyhood who was so kind and generous and had chosen such a very bad time to be born. Also, of course, Rick was interested professionally, for he had used Lanny's problem as the basis for a drama of class conflict, and the way things were going he might do it again. One cannot be a writer without thinking about "copy."

II

What Lanny wanted to talk about was not his marital situation, which Rick had known for a long time, but the services he might render to the cause they both had at heart. He enjoyed an exceptional position for several reasons. Being an American, he was supposed to be neutral in the quarrels of old Europe ; also, being the type which Hollywood has chosen for its heroes, he carried to many people some of the glamour of the screen. His rich wife gave him access to the great and powerful, and his genuine occupation of art expert provided him with reasons for travelling from one capital to the next. Such a man ought to be able to give real help to the cause of social justice.

"I'm no writer or speaker," he said ; "I guess I've had too easy a life, and I'll never be anything but an amateur. But I can get information, and there ought to be some place where I could bring it and have it put to use."

"Wickthorpe and Albany would give you a liberal expense account," declared the Englishman, with a bit of mischief in his eye.

"No doubt," said Lanny ; "they've already sounded me out. But what use would they make of the information I brought them ? All they want to do with Hitler is to set him to fighting Russia, and I can think of better uses for him."

"What, for example ?"

"Well, let him fight Mussolini over Austria."

"Have Robbie get you a diplomatic post," suggested Rick, "and you can enjoy yourself setting all your enemies at one another's throats !"

"In the first place, my father will be the last man in America to have any influence in Washington ; and as for our State Department, from what I hear it's going ahead just like your Foreign Office—business as usual. I want to take my information to some place where it will serve our cause."

Up to this time the best Lanny had been able to think of was to help Eric Vivian Pomeroy-Nielson to write plays, and occasional articles for those few newspapers and weeklies which were open to ideas of a pinkish tinge. That was the tragedy of both men's position : when you adopted such ideas you condemned yourself to futility ; you became a voice crying in the wilderness, and you might as well have been crying to the hawks and the buzzards, for all the attention you got.

It had become worse than ever since Adolf Hitler had seized power in Germany, nearly two years ago. Before that time Lanny and Rick had had a party they could believe in and a press they could help: the Socialist party of France and the Labour party of Britain, groups which stood for peace and international understanding, the cutting down of exploitation and the power of financial oligarchies. But how could anybody be for peace, with the Nazis turning all the power of Germany to armaments, with General Göring setting out to build an air force that would terrorize Europe? Lanny and Rick, pointing this out, were scolded by their former comrades and told that they were crazy. Rick found himself, to his great embarrassment, on the side with Winston Churchill, resonant imperialist, while Lanny Budd found himself agreeing with the Army and Navy League!

Rick said: "Do you still have the idea that you can go into Germany and pose as a friend of Göring?"

"I don't know," Lanny said. "It won't do any harm to try. He can only order me out."

"Surely he must know your record by now, Lanny!"

"I kept thinking that the last time; but you know how it is—every bureaucracy commits mistakes. Also, you must remember, the fat Hermann is so corrupt it's hard for him to believe that anybody is honest. The offers he made to me must seem to him irresistible. He may be thinking: 'Well, if the fellow has accepted, and is going ahead, he'd have to be posing as a Leftist in England and France.' That's the way the game is played; wheels within wheels and treachery piled on treachery."

"You're poorly equipped for it, Lanny," warned the friend who knew him best.

"I'm not so sure," was the reply. "The honest man may be very successful as a liar when nobody believes a word he says. The Nazis may be convinced that I'm deep, and they won't ever be quite sure how deep I am—how many levels there are to my tricks! All I want is to have one person who knows what I'm really up to."

"It seems to me you're starting on a darned uncomfortable career," declared the playwright.

III

It was a Friday afternoon, and Rick's eldest son came home for the week-end. Alfy, as he was called, was nearly ready for his career as an undergraduate at Magdalen College, which the English so

unaccountably pronounce Maudlin; he had taken a bus from Oxford, and had had to walk quite a distance, so he arrived with shoes muddy and trousers wet, but with the glow of good health in his cheeks; he was just seventeen, tall and slender like his father, also his grandfather after whom he was named; dark eyes, dark wavy hair, a thin serious face. He was precocious, as he had to be in such a family; a conscientious student, much more to the left than his father had been at seventeen.

"Topping!" he said when Lanny asked how he was, and "Righto!" when his father suggested that he change to something dry. Lanny had promised to drive him some forty miles to the fashionable school where Marceline Detaze was a boarder, to bring the girl over for Sunday. Lanny didn't mind dashing about the country like that, regardless of weather. He was fond of this eager intelligent youth and ready to do his share in helping along the match which he had suggested when the two babies had made their appearance in a world torn by universal war. Beauty's daughter had been left fatherless a few months after her birth, and Rick's son had very nearly become a half-orphan before his eyes saw the light. Now it seemed to both Rick and Lanny that the dark shadow of conflict was looming over the world again; but no use to say it, for people didn't want to believe it and they knew how to believe what they chose. Perhaps some deep-hidden instinct guided the young people, causing them to pair off early and fulfil their chief function before it was too late.

It amused Lanny to discover that he was an elder; he didn't feel it, but Alfie did and looked up to him with great respect, as a person who had travelled widely, met the great ones of the earth, and had adventures concerning which it perhaps wasn't sporting to question him too closely. Was it really true that he had been taken into the dungeons of the Nazis and seen them beating a poor old Jewish banker to make him give up his money? "Do you think we'll have to fight those beggars some day? And is it a fact that we are letting them outbuild us in planes?" Lanny realized that here was somebody who took his statements seriously and didn't regard him as slightly daffy. "I'm taking more mathematics than I properly should," revealed the baronet's grandson. "I've an idea it'll be needed in our air service. But don't speak of that when the mater's around because you know how it would trouble her."

Poor Nina! Something shivered inside Lanny Budd at the thought that she might some day have to go through that agony again. One time was enough for any woman's life! He was moved to repeat to this lad the story of the strange experience which had

befallen him when he was just at Alfy's age, living with the Robbie Budd family in Connecticut while Rick was flying in the battle of France; how Lanny had awakened at dawn, at the very hour that Rick had crashed and all but died, and Lanny had seen what he thought was his friend standing at the foot of the bed, with a red gash across his forehead—the same scar which the ex-aviator bore to this hour. "Your mother nursed him back to life," said Lanny. "It'll be deuced hard on her if she has to do it again." That was as far as English good form permitted you to go.

IV

Here came Marceline, dancing; she always seemed to be dancing, so happy, so young, so full of energy. She was a month or two younger than Alfy, but, after the way of the female, she had left him far behind; she was a full-blooming young lady while he was a gawky boy—so he felt himself, and was helpless in her hands. The daughter of Beauty Budd couldn't fail to be something special to look at, and this had been made doubly certain when her father had been so handsome a man as Marcel Detaze. The child had been well provided with mirrors and had listened to the talk of the ladies and the women servants of her household, so she knew what she had and what she was going to do with it. A slender, graceful figure, in accord with the fashions of the time; lovely blond hair with glints of gold; and that feature with which Lanny had been familiar in her father, eyebrows much darker than her hair, lending an unusual touch to her bold, high-coloured charms. She was half American and half French, having the vivacious temperament of her father's people and the self-reliance she had got from a mother who had run away from a Baptist preacher's home and become an artist's model when no older than Marceline now.

Yes, indeed; poor Alfy, very much in love, and with a lack of worldly graces, was going to be hard put to it to hold her. She was the only child of a great painter whom everybody talked about, who, indeed, was on his way to becoming an "old master"; out of the proceeds of his toil Marceline was going to enjoy comfort and perhaps luxury. She knew there was London and Paris, she knew there were palaces and yachts, and that all such delights were within her reach. That was the way she had been brought up. Lanny, who would have had it different if he could, had to take the position of a spectator, here as in so many other places in that *beau monde* which enveloped and conditioned him, he was forced to remain silently acquiescent.

This Beauty-in-the-Budd, as Rick called her, sat wedged in the front seat between the two men, and Lanny drove and listened to her chatter. Words poured out in floods, because life was so wonderful it could not be restrained. Her talk was all about persons : about girls in the school whom Alfie knew or should know, about boys who were coming to the Reaches for the week-end dances and parties. When they got together they all chattered like this, at least the girls did. They remembered what they had said in other places and repeated what they had heard others say, and it was like the conversation of a family of chickadees in the hedge. 'Quite a contrast between this and the talk which Lanny had been carrying on with Alfie ; he wondered : " Did women all have to be chickadees or was it simply the way they were trained ? "

This young couple were in love with each other, but in their own competitive way which outsiders could not regulate. Marceline resented having her destiny decided, and insisted upon starting all over again on her own terms. She said that Alfie was as solemn as an old owl, and persisted in teasing him into activity and making him miserable in the process. She hadn't the slightest interest in such matters as politics and only the vaguest notion as to what mathematics might be ; but there was nothing she didn't know about the arts of coquetry, and she practised them on every personable young man who came in sight—generally those who were older than Alfie and therefore more likely to throw him into a panic. It was all rather cruel, but it was nature, and doubtless it was better to settle these affairs with quips and teasing than for the young men to butt each other like the stags in the forest.



Back at The Reaches they had dinner, and afterwards young friends from the neighbourhood came in. Things were just the way they had been in Lanny's boyhood, when he had first visited here and met Rick's playmates, including Rosemary, who had become his first sweetheart and had sat out in the moonlight while Kurt Meissner played the piano and they dreamed wonderful dreams. Now it was a new generation, sons and daughters of Lanny's playmates, but they seemed exactly the same. Fashions hadn't changed much—they came in cycles ; skirts were short, and then they were longer, and the same with haircuts. Love was the same, only they talked about it more freely ; laughter was the same and no less of it, in spite of wars past and others on the way.

Lanny's first visit to this home had been in the spring of 1914, and nobody had been worrying; he wondered now, in the autumn of 1934, would they be worrying next summer or the one after that?

They moved the rugs and furniture from the centre of the drawing-room, and put on phonograph records and danced. "Hot jazz" had come from America, and now a new thing called "swing," and the young people shivered with delight, cherishing their favourite records and raving over them endlessly. They had forgotten that the old dances existed—all but a few like Marceline, to whom Lanny had taught everything he knew. When he danced with her, the others were apt to stop and watch; this had happened in many a drawing-room and even on the floor of a casino; they could have got engagements and made their living that way if they had cared to. When Marceline danced, something arose inside and possessed her; she became a creature of music and motion, expressing delight and at the same time knowing that she was doing so, exulting in the attention she was getting. Joy and pride in equal measure, each stimulated the other.

It had been that way from earliest childhood, the first toddling steps that Lanny had watched her discovering for herself; he had praised and encouraged her, and others had done the same, and so they had made a dancer. She would dance alone for the pure delight of it, but she would find a mirror to practise before, and would be thinking of those who would be watching her later on. She came by this honestly, for her mother had loved to be looked at, first as a model and then in the world of fashion; she had been what was called a "professional beauty." Marceline's father had painted pictures to be looked at; and while he had professed to be indifferent to praise and had refused sternly to promote his own work, Lanny suspected it was because he had met with so many disappointments that he had been forced to paint for himself. Surely the primary purpose of art is to communicate to others, and not alone to the artist!

VI

Back in Wickthorpe Lodge, as his temporary home was called, Lanny settled down to normal domestic life, something he had denied himself for a long time. He enjoyed the society of his lovely young wife; he dressed himself properly and took her to social affairs, carefully avoiding the expression of any ideas with which she might disagree. He reminded himself that after all she was only twenty-six, and her mind wasn't entirely matured; it was no use

expecting her to know everything or even to wish to know it. He played with his little daughter, teaching her dance steps and going with her to see the new kittens. He played the piano, and read books he was interested in; he went over his card-files and carried on his business correspondence with the help of a typist who came when summoned. He enjoyed peace and quiet, and thought with an ache in his heart: "If only men would learn to let one another be happy!"

But all the time he was like a man waiting for a court to pass sentence upon him and for a bailiff or sheriff to come and take him away. He counted the days and tried to guess when Genosse Monck would probably get back to Berlin and a letter from Trudi Schultz, alias Frau Mueller, might be expected. He felt certain that she would write; the conspirators would need all the money they could get, and she would hardly leave him in uncertainty. If no letter came, it could only mean that Monck was some kind of fraud.

As the days passed, Lanny fell to guessing about that—what kind of fraud would he be? A terrorist—and had he now bought his gas-pipe and his nitroglycerin, or whatever it is that bombs are made of nowadays? And who would it be? Hitler or Stalin or Trotsky, Hermann Göring or Pierre Laval, or—God forbid!—Ramsay MacDonald or King George of England? Lanny couldn't believe that this man of intelligence and force was a common swindler who would spend the money on wine and women; no, he was some sort of revolutionary, or else a well-trained agent—in which case Lanny ought to get a letter from Trudi Schultz that would be written under duress or else would be a forgery. Rather difficult to lose yourself in the music of Liszt or Chopin while speculations such as these were haunting your mind!

At last, a letter with a German stamp and a Berlin postmark! A plain envelope, with no sender's name; Lanny shivered, knowing that it was the court sentence. He went to his own study to open it, and standing in the middle of the floor he read:

DEAR MR. BUDD,—I have many new sketches which I believe will interest you, and would like to have your help in marketing them. If you are in Berlin on 6th November I would be happy to meet you and show them to you. If that date is not convenient, any date thereafter will do.—Respectfully yours,
MUELLER.

A careful and proper note that could not excite the suspicions of any Gestapo man, or of a wife who might have an impulse to pry

into her husband's mail. The writing, of German type, might have been a man's or a woman's. Lanny, having had some correspondence with Trudi at the time he arranged for her drawings to be published in *Le Populaire*, now got her letters from his files and sat down and studied them with a lens. More important yet, there were two little sketches with the letter; one was a head with which Lanny was most familiar, his urbane self in his most coming-on mood. Trudi, heart-broken and terror-racked, was saying: "Bright and shining one, dwelling in safety in a happy land—that fortress built by Nature for herself against infection and the hand of war!"

The other picture was of Hansi Robin with his violin, and that, too, had its magic. Ludi and Trudi Schultz, a pair of pure-blooded Aryans, had been invited to the palace of Johannes Robin, Jewish *Schieber*, to listen to Hansi and his New England wife playing the music of the German Beethoven and the Jewish Mendelssohn, the French César Franck and the Hungarian Reményi. This bright little sketch was a reminder of that evening; its message was that of Schiller's hymn and the Ninth Symphony, that all men become brothers where the gentle wing of joy is spread.

Of course it might be possible that a skilled draughtsman had imitated Trudi's style; a signature can be forged, and many an expert has been humiliated by a clever imitation of a painting. But Lanny thought this was the young woman's work. He studied the sketches under a glass and saw that the lines were clear and clean, which would hardly have been the case if she had been working under duress. He had what he had been looking forward to for more than a year, a chance to meet her and perhaps to ask her some questions. For that and that alone he would be willing to go into Naziland again.

VII

Lanny had now come to a parting of the ways in his dealings with his wife. Should he go to her and say, straight out: "I have established a contact with the underground movement in Germany and I propose to go there to make sure about it"? That was the course he would have preferred to take; but was it consistent with his pledge of secrecy, with the protection he owed to people who were risking their lives? It had been all right to tell Rick, who was a comrade, and would keep his lips sealed without even being warned. But would Irma keep a secret when she didn't want to and didn't think that she ought to? When she considered herself being greatly wronged and ardently disliked the persons who were wronging her?

Fanny Barnes, Lanny's large and aggressive mother-in-law, was talking about paying them a visit. Would Irma, nursing a grievance against her husband, fail to pour it out to her mother? Would Fanny feel enjoined against telling it to her brother Horace and to her brother-in-law Joseph Barnes, one of the three trustees of the Barnes estate? Would she even withhold it from those inquisitive dowagers with whom she went about in London? Of course she wouldn't, and the story would be all over town in a few days.

The American heiress and her prince consort were conspicuous people; the eyes of gossip were watching them day and night and the tongues of gossip were busy with them, not merely over teacups and telephone, but by the medium of high-speed rotary presses. Let Irma speak a cross word to her husband at the breakfast table and the footman would whisper it to Irma's maid, and she would pass it on to the maid of the Dowager Lady Wickthorpe at the castle, who in turn would tell it to her best friend in London and it would appear in the *Chatterer* before the end of the week. Perhaps not with the names, but so indicated that all the world would know who was meant. "A popular American lady of many millions whose husband amuses himself as an art expert is being made unhappy because he persists in consorting with the Pinks and making leftish remarks in the most exclusive drawing-rooms. Just now it is said that he is distributing the commissions on his picture sales to those 'Genossen' who are secretly opposing the German Führer. Friends of the Nazi regime in London—and there are many of them, highly placed—are reported making sharply pointed remarks on the subject."

No, that wouldn't do; either Lanny had to keep the secret from Irma or else give up his project altogether. But did he have a right to give it up? Did he owe no debt to those who were sacrificing everything for the cause he professed to believe in? Is a man's only obligation to his wife? Can it even be said that a man's *first* obligation is to his wife rather than to what he believes is the cause of truth and justice? Does a marriage ceremony give a woman the right to take charge of a man's thinking and tell him what is true and what is false? Has a woman the right to try to do that, no matter how rich she is or how sure of her opinion?

Whatever her rights may be, it is certain that she has the power to make him uncomfortable if he persists in making her uncomfortable. Lanny wasn't the first man to have made that discovery—the telephones and rotary presses of ancient Athens had spread the report that the left-wing philosopher Socrates was in hot water all the time, and there were even rumours concerning the head of the state, the august and ultra-fashionable Pericles. As for the grandson

of Budd's, who was neither philosopher nor statesman, but only a playboy trying his best to grow up, he didn't want to hurt anybody in the world and was truly thinking about the happiness of his wife when he argued that he wasn't going to get into any trouble and that it was really a kindness to keep her from knowing things which would cause her so much needless anxiety.

He was so scrupulous that he took the trouble to make sure that every statement he made to her should be the exact literal truth. It was true that Germany was an excellent hunting-ground for old masters at the present time. The aristocracy was impoverished, and so were many kinds of business-men; taxes were rising, and the only persons who were prospering were those who controlled the raw materials and the plants needed for the making of war goods. Americans, on the other hand, were having a New Deal. Robbie Budd and other soreheads said it was "inflation," and maybe they were right, but anyhow it was paying dividends to some groups, and a few of them had learned to think of rare and famous paintings as a safer form of investment than even gold or government bonds.

Zoltan Kertezsi, Lanny's friend and associate who had initiated him into this distinguished business, happened to be in Paris. Knowing him well, Lanny had figured how to get exactly what he wanted from him. He sent a wire: "You may recall that I mentioned having learned of a delicate small Hubert van Eyck in Germany I believe same might be purchased but there are social reasons why I hesitate to make the approach if I had a wire from you inquiring for such a picture it would facilitate matters will divide commission."

That would sound perfectly natural to Zoltan, who possessed a battery of harmless devices for making contacts with broken-down Erlauchten and Durchlauchten and causing them to think they were performing a cultural service by permitting their art treasures to be added to some famous American collection at a high price. Zoltan had remarked that such people must be handled as if they were made of wet tissue paper; so, before the sun had set, Lanny received a reply from Paris: "I have possible market for small Hubert van Eyck and recall that you once mentioned having seen such a picture in Germany would it be possible for you to enable me to see a good photograph of it and possibly get a price?"

VIII

This telegram the schemer took to his wife, who was, as he expected, much upset. "Why, Lanny! You said that nothing would ever induce you to set foot in Germany again!"

"I know, but I've been thinking it over. It appears that Hitler is going to stay in power for a long time, and whether I go in or stay out isn't going to make any difference. It seems foolish to give up the best market I have—to say nothing of all our friends there."

"But will the Nazis let you in?"

"If they pay any attention to me at all, they'll know that I'm bringing them foreign exchange which they need badly. If they don't want me, they'll refuse me a visa and that'll be that."

"Lanny, it terrifies me to think of your walking into that trap again. I know how you feel about conditions there and what you'll be doing and saying."

He had foreseen this and given careful study to his reply. "If I go there on a business trip, I'm certainly not going to say anything to offend my customers, and I certainly don't want any unfavourable publicity. Also, if I have you with me, I'll be under obligation not to do anything to spoil your pleasure."

"Why don't you tell Zoltan where the picture is, and let him attend to it himself? You surely don't need the money."

"I doubt if Zoltan could handle this deal. It's a matter of some delicacy—the picture belongs to an aunt of Stubendorf, and you know how it is with the old nobility, especially the females. She has met me, but probably doesn't remember my name, and I'll have to get Seine Hochgeboren to introduce me all over again. We could run out and see Kurt, if you wouldn't mind."

"Lanny, it makes cold chills run all over me! Would you still expect to make Kurt think you're a Nazi sympathizer?"

He smiled. "Kurt and I were friends long before the Nazis were invented, and he won't mind if I tell him I've lost my interest in politics. He'll think that's natural enough, now that the Robin family is out of Germany. Remember, I presented Kurt with a whole library of four-hand piano compositions—enough to keep us busy for a full week if we try them all."

Making playful remarks and evading like a lively young eel, Lanny managed to get through this difficult conversation. Irma was so concerned to have him do what she called "behaving himself" that she grasped at every straw of hope. More than three months had passed since he had come out of Naziland, and during that time he hadn't done anything indicative of madness. It had been his family duty to attend Freddi's funeral, but he hadn't revealed any deep emotion over it, and now it was possible for Irma to think that, having got his near-relatives safe, he might consider his duty done and give his wife a chance to enjoy the happiness which was her birthright.

Also, he was proposing a trip ; and it was a part of Irma's upbringing, it was the psychology of everybody in the world she knew—they were always ready to take a trip. They had the newest and sportiest cars, and kept them supplied with gasoline and oil, water and air, each in its proper place ; they had fancy leather bags, and valets and maids to pack them at an hour's notice. At home they would say : " Let's run down to Miami and drop in on Winnie," or : " Let's drive out to California and see how Bertie's getting along with his new wife." Over here it would be Biarritz or Florence, Salzburg or St. Moritz—it didn't matter so long as it was some place to go. If you didn't have much to do when you got there, you could always move on to some other place.

Now it was Berlin. The time of the year was pleasant ; a bit chilly, but bracing, and Irma had lovely furs. They would take the night ferry to the Hook of Holland, and from there a one-day drive. They would visit Stubendorf in Upper Silesia and be guests at the Schloss, which seemed romantic to them both. In Berlin there was the Salon, and the concerts, and a social season getting under way. Yes, it was possible to think of many agreeable things to see and do. Irma said, as usual : " Let's go " ; but then, frowning, she added : " Listen to me, Lanny. I mean it—if you do anything to make me miserable the way you did, I'll never forgive you as long as I live ! "

IX

They waited only to see Robbie, who was due in London. He arrived, outwardly calm, inwardly exultant over his successes. Zaharoff had agreed to take a million dollars' worth of Budd-Erling shares and had given Robbie permission to mention this to several of his former English associates. Denis de Bruyne had taken three million francs' worth and was getting up a syndicate of his friends. Also Emily Chattersworth was coming in ; and now Robbie, at request, sat down with Irma and laid the proposal before her. She said that she owed as much to the Budd family as any old Greek spider or wolf or devil ; she wrote to her uncle Joseph, instructing him to descend into that vault where her treasures were stored. It was far beneath a Wall Street bank building, protected by layers of steel and concrete and having spaces between filled alternately with water and poison gas ; a place which met all the biblical requirements, where neither moth nor rust could corrupt nor thieves break through and steal. From the many large bundles of securities Mr. Joseph Barnes was ordered to select half a million dollars'

worth of those which had brought in the smallest returns during the present year ; he was to sell them at the market and replace them with Budd-Erling preferred plus common as a bonus.

Irma wasn't supposed to come into full control of her fortune until she was thirty ; but she had taken to expressing her wishes, and so far the trustees had not found it necessary to oppose her. Uncle Joseph couldn't find any fault with the business reputation of her father-in-law or with her desire to promote the fortunes of her acquired family. Of course, Robbie's capable ex-mistress saw to it that the news of Irma's action was spread among her fashionable friends, and Margy, Dowager Lady Eversham-Watson, and Sophie, former Baroness de la Tourette, and all the other ladies with large incomes and still larger appetities were eager to hear about this opportunity of enrichment. "Son," exclaimed the promoter, "we've got the world by the tail !"

He was surprised to learn that Lanny was going into Germany again, but he didn't say much about it, because he was wrapped up in his own affairs and never too curious about other people's. He took it as natural that his son should have decided not to cut off his own nose to spite his face ; it wouldn't do Hitler any harm or Lanny any good. Robbie took the projected trip as a sign of returning sanity and so expressed himself to the young wife, thus confirming what she was trying so hard to believe. "Encourage him to make all the money he can," said the father. "He'll manage to find uses for it, and it ought to be at least as much fun as playing the piano."

So Irma's own father would have told her if he had been alive. Missing him greatly, she was moved to take Lanny's father as a substitute. She told some of her troubles, not in a complaining way, but as one asking for guidance, and Robbie, who had had the same troubles with a too trusting idealist, helped her to understand his foibles. "We all think we're going to change the world when we're young," he explained. "When we get older we realize what a tough proposition it is, and in the end we have our hands full taking care of ourselves and those for whom we are responsible. Lanny's pink measles are lasting longer than most cases ; but be patient with him—he has to cure himself."

"I know," responded Irma. "People won't let you tell them things. Maybe I'm that way, too."

"Remember this," added the shrewd man of affairs. "Lanny doesn't make so much money selling pictures, but it's an intellectual and artistic occupation and brings you into contact with interesting people."

"I know that, Robbie. Don't think I'm regretting my marriage."

"You understand how I feel about it. I've always left Lanny free to follow his own path, but I haven't given up hope that he may come to take an interest in my affairs. I thought I was training him for that. Now, here's a new opportunity—if he could be brought to see it and come in with me, I could push him right to the top in a year or two. You know what a quick mind he has."

"Oh, indeed!" assented the wife. "And I'd be glad if it could be managed. But it would never do for me to suggest it."

"Bear it in mind and perhaps find a chance to drop a hint. Just think what he could do for us in Germany, if only he could get over his political notions and learn to take business as business. You know what connections he has; and you could help him, as Beauty has helped me so many times."

Irma shook her head. "I'm afraid it's no go, Robbie. Lanny hates the Nazis with a sort of personal hatred."

"He's been too close to them. If he'd seen the other governments of Europe getting started he'd understand there isn't much choice among them. They all put their opponents down with brutality, because they're afraid; but when they're safe in the saddle, they settle down and you can hardly tell them apart. In a few years the Nazis will all be wearing frock-coats."

"I can't argue with Lanny," said the young wife sadly. "He's read so much more than I have, and he thinks I'm just a dumb cluck."

"You have a lot more influence than you know, and between us we may get him interested in aeroplanes." Robbie said that, and then after a moment added: "Give him time. There are no perfect husbands, you know."

Irma nodded. There were unspoken thoughts between them. She had been taught the value of her money and understood why Robbie valued her so highly as a wife. But they were both of them well-bred persons, who would act on what they called "common sense" but wouldn't put it into words.

BOOK TWO

SOME HIDDEN THUNDER

5

Des Todes Eigen

I

IN Germany the highways are smooth and straight and lined with well-kept trees, many of them fruit-bearing. New roads were being started, and some of these were wonderful—four-track model *Autobahnen* with all the cross-roads over- or under-passed. Lanny said these were military roads, intended for the invasion of the bordering countries; he added that they were built with American money, borrowed by the German Republic and by its member states and cities. Lanny rarely lost an opportunity to make some disapproving remark about what was going on in Hitlerland, and Irma had learned not to comment, because if she did an argument might start and Lanny would overwhelm her with facts and figures.

What she saw in this country was clean, well-kept streets and houses, and the people in them the same. Everybody appeared well fed, and working from dawn to sunset; a peaceful and industrious land if ever there was one. Adolf Hitler was carrying out literally his promise to provide work for everybody; factory chimneys were smoking day and night—but don't point this out, because if you do, Lanny will say that it's preparation for war, and anybody can do that if he means to make war, but what is the good of it if he doesn't? And all these Stormtroopers marching and singing war-songs! Irma doesn't know the words of the songs, and it is enough for her that the men are young and good-looking, well dressed and happy, singing in tune and marching in step. But don't say that, either!

Irma has lived all her life in free countries, and finds it hard to realize that there are any other sort. She has never witnessed an act of violence in her twenty-six years on earth, and she has difficulty in making real to herself the idea that such acts are frequently committed. To be sure, she knows that the Robins were plundered of their possessions, and she cannot go so far as to think that Lanny

was having a nightmare when he saw old Solomon Hellstein being beaten with whips in one of the dungeons of the Gestapo. But Irma finds reasons if not excuses for these events. She knows that Johannes Robin, in spite of his being their friend and very agreeable company, was an unconscionable *Schieber*, a speculator in the currency of the German Republic. That seems to her a different thing from getting rich by building up public utility corporations after the fashion of the late J. Paramount Barnes. If you should mention such matters as stock-watering and the pyramiding of holding-companies, Irma would stare at you blankly, perhaps thinking you some sort of anarchist; for she has been taught that these are the processes out of which the prosperity and greatness of America were built.

Also, the misfortunes of the Robins were brought on them by those two sons. Hansi, the out-and-out Red, asked for the worst of trouble and escaped it only because Lanny and his wife managed to lure him out of Germany in time. The Communists had had no mercy on their class enemies, and why shouldn't Hitler dose them with their own medicine? As for Freddi, who called himself a Socialist, Irma was willing to admit that he had been harmless, like her own husband; but she considered them both dupes of shrewder men, who were using them for a while and would throw them aside when the time for action came. If in the confusion of a great social change some of the innocent had got mixed up with the guilty, that was a tragic accident, and what Irma had got from it was an intense desire to keep her husband from putting his head into a bear-trap.

II

It was evening when they arrived in Berlin. They had telegraphed the Adlon for reservations, and they found newspaper reporters waiting; they were prominent people, well known in the city, and their coming would be made much of by the Nazi-controlled press. The "blood purge" of last summer had pretty well killed the tourist traffic, so important to the German economy, and the *Regierung* wished to establish the idea that all this was ancient history, an unfortunate necessity at the time, but now to be forgotten by everybody both at home and abroad.

Two shining American *Zelebriitäten* would be interviewed amid the popping of flashlight bulbs and would have their opinions on art questions taken seriously. They had come with commissions to buy old masters and prepared to pay precious American dollars. They

were expecting to run out to visit their old friend General Graf Stubendorf, also Herr Budd's boyhood friend, Kurt Meissner, the composer. They would be interested to visit the autumn Salon, conducted under the personal supervision of the Führer in order to exclude degenerate modernist stuff. Herr Budd agreed with the Führer on this subject—he was the stepson of a French painter, a sound representational artist, and had had the honour of showing to the Führer personally one of the best-known Detaze portraits. All of this had been published before and was in the *Archiv* of the newspapers, so the reporters had it prepared in advance. When, in answer to a question, Herr Budd stated that he was a non-political person, that pleased everyone, for the Nazis wanted all the world to be non-political except themselves.

Lanny telephoned to Stubendorf and made certain that both their friends were at the estate. Seine Hochgeboren renewed his invitation, and next morning they set out for Upper Silesia over another of the fast highways. It is a coal-mining region, and great numbers of factory chimneys were pouring smoke into the chilly air of approaching winter. The district of Stubendorf had been a part of Poland ever since the Versailles treaty, and if you asked why all the coal was burning and factory wheels turning in this vicinity, any German-speaking person would tell you that no German wanted war, but every German was determined to get back into the Fatherland. The arming and drilling—one of the commonest sights of the countryside—was for the purpose of making clear the German will to the whole non-German world. If they wanted war, they could have it; if they wanted peace, let them get out of German lands.

This was an old problem for Lanny Budd; he had listened to it being discussed at the Paris Peace Conference, day and night, from every possible point of view. He had seen with his eyes the elder statesmen known as the "Big Three"—Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau—crawling round on their hands and knees over a huge map spread on the floor, trying with coloured pencils to mark out some solution of an insoluble problem. The various sorts of people were all mixed together, and if you tried to work on the principle of self-determination, you would have districts and even villages chopped up. In Stubendorf itself was a large Polish population, but they were mostly poor peasants, whereas the well-to-do and educated people were German; the latter were in position to make most of the noise and did so. They looked upon the Poles as a subhuman race, born to be ruled by the *Herrenvolk*, and now this *Volk* had a Führer who was going to bring it to pass. The unanimity with which he was supported made a great impression upon Irma; but

she mustn't mention the fact, because Lanny would say: "It's because all the dissenters have been murdered or put into concentration camps; and what sort of unanimity is that?"

III

They were welcomed to the modernized and comfortable Schloss, which didn't seem so grand to Lanny now as it had at the age of fourteen. •Seine Hochgeboren was an old-fashioned Prussian nobleman, very serious and formal, but intelligent within the limits of his training. He considered that he was doing something quite modernistic in receiving two fashionable but untitled Americans into his home. He had done so after he had met them in Berlin and carefully made sure that their money was real; also that they met influential persons, and could be discreetly pumped as to the attitude of Britain, France, and America to events in the Fatherland. The General Graf, a high-ranking officer of the Reichswehr, accepted the new government as it was his duty to do, and if he had any reservations in his mind no foreigner would be permitted a glimpse of them. He had no apologies to make, but took the dignified position that what Germans did became right as soon as they had done it.

Irma was impressed by this German aristocracy, almost as much as by the English. They were age-tested and from this they derived assurance; compared with them she felt herself a *parvenue*—though of course she wouldn't admit it, even to herself. However, she watched what they did and said, and made mental notes. She had learned that when she didn't know what to say, she could keep quiet, and this suited well her placid disposition. Afterwards she could ask Lanny about the subject, finding it convenient that her husband knew so many things. His statements could be depended upon when they had to do with music, poetry, painting, or with history—everything except politics and economics. The fact that he was bored by the aristocracy and made fun of them was perhaps another way of being aristocratic; sometimes it impressed his wife and sometimes it annoyed her.

After a proper period of sociability Lanny revealed the purpose of his journey. He showed the telegram from Zoltan and asked if he might be permitted to inspect the Hubert van Eyck which was in the possession of the Baroninwitwe von Wiesenschmetterling. Seine Hochgeboren froze up and said that he doubted very much whether his elderly relative would consider parting with this family treasure; Lanny, who had encountered this attitude many times

and accepted it as part of the bargaining process, explained suavely the cultural importance of great collections which were being made in America, their effect in bringing sweetness and light to a well-to-do but spiritually backward people. Such was the European tone towards America, and Lanny had learned from Zaharoff that one must belong to that nation in which one is putting over a deal.

The Baroninwitwe lived in the Neumark, not far off their route returning to Berlin. If it had been in well-to-do but spiritually backward America, the General Graf would have called up his aunt and made sure she was at home and told her about the matter. But this was the spiritual but frugal Fatherland, and so the master of the Schloss contented himself with writing a note and giving it to Lanny. However, the American was fairly certain in his own mind that his host would send a telegram or otherwise give warning to the old lady, so that she would demand a high price or perhaps refuse to put a price until she had taken his advice.

IV

Kurt Meissner still lived in the five-roomed stone cottage which the lord of the castle had set aside for his use. It was the Nazi party which had paid Kurt enough money to build a studio near by—much like the one Beauty Budd had built for him at Bienville. Kurt's gentle blonde wife was becoming what the ladies call plump, and had presented him with four children who were perfect models of what the Nazi leaders approved but so rarely exemplified. The eldest was six, a pink-cheeked and solemn-eyed little boy, who already played the piano better than Irma Budd had ever learned to do with the help of the most expensive teachers.

Kurt was the same long-faced, severe-looking man, prematurely aged by war and suffering. Being slightly older than Lanny, he had always patronized him, and now felt gently sorry for him because of the way he was wasting his life. While Irma practised her German with the admiring *Hausfrau*, Kurt took Lanny to his studio and played his new piano sonata; Lanny listened attentively, and thought: "It is rather dry. Kurt is now imitating Kurt. That is, when he's not imitating Bach. The fountain of his inspiration is drying up. That adagio is almost a plagiarism of Beethoven. Those stormy passages are forced." And so on. It makes a great difference in what mood and with what predisposition one approaches music; this same sonata had just been rendered by its composer to an audience in Breslau, which considered him the new Germany's

most promising composer and had listened to the work with rapt attention.

Lanny knew what he was expected to say, and said it. He knew how to deal with Kurt, because for fifteen years or so he had considered him a great man and his spiritual mentor. He knew all the phrases of admiration and devotion, and he must use them now, and tell himself that he was doing it for Kurt's own good. Some day this Nazi nightmare would pass, and a noble soul would awaken and rub his eyes and be glad that Lanny had stood by those ideals to which they had pledged themselves in boyhood—of love and service to all mankind and not merely to blond Aryans.

By tacit agreement they left the subject of politics alone, and did not once mention a family of Jewish *Schieber*. Kurt was free to assume that since Freddi was buried and the rest were free, that unhappy page might be turned and forgotten. When Irma was alone with Kurt she took the occasion to tell him that Lanny was conducting himself much more sensibly now; Kurt was glad to hear this, and said so. Kind and fundamentally good, but weak—this was the composer's judgment of his boyhood playmate, and Lanny let it stand that way.

Living a double life, had been Rick's phrase; and here it was. Lanny was a spy in Hiderland, a secret agent in the enemy's country. It is supposed to be romantic and exciting, but that is in the imagination of persons who have never experienced it. There may be some who like to lie and cheat and find pleasure in outwitting other persons, but Lanny was not among them and it hurt him every time he said something to Kurt which did not represent his true beliefs.

He had to remind himself that Kurt had done this himself, as a German agent in Paris right after the armistice. Would it occur to him now that Lanny might be returning the compliment? If so, the composer would probably not reveal it; he would dig deeper under Lanny's position, as entrenched troops do in war-time, mining and countermining. Lanny watched for signs of this; for he feared that Kurt was deeper than he and would probably outwit him if it came to a real showdown. They would be two antagonists in darkness, groping for each other's throat; yet they would still be friends, using the language of love and, strangely enough, feeling it.

Yes, Lanny decided that no matter how hard he might be fighting Kurt, he would still be yearning after him, with true old-fashioned German *Schwärmerei*. All the time they were playing four-hand piano compositions, Lanny knew this with every fibre

of his being : while they prayed in solemn ecstasy with Bach, while they danced in gilded ballrooms with Mozart, while they laboured in spiritual anguish with Beethoven. Brothers have fought against brothers, and fathers against sons, in all civil wars ; and here was a new kind of war, spreading rapidly all over the earth : National Socialism against true Socialism, racialism against the brotherhood of humanity.



The widow of the Baron von Wiesenschmetterling lived in a fine old mansion entirely surrounded by potato-fields. At present they were bare and dark, but if you had come in midsummer you would have found them green, and would have seen a hundred or so Polish women, clad in what appeared to be potato-sacks, patiently hoeing the furrows from dawn to dark. They were brought into Eastern Germany by long trainloads, and all Germans agreed that they had been providentially created for two purposes, to produce potatoes and to produce potato-hoers.

The mistress of the estate was a white-haired lady with a large bosom covered with black silk and old-fashioned ruching. Over it she had placed her best string of pearls, saying plainly that if you thought she was hard up and was going to sell any of her art treasures, you were vulgar intruders. She looked upon all Americans as dubious characters, and what business had they ever had to come and kill Germans ? She held herself stiffly, and did not unbend even after she had read the note from her nephew. She could find no fault with the appearance of this young couple, or with the German speech of the man ; the young woman had sense enough to keep her mouth shut, and that helped. The noble widow, *gnädige Witwe*, consented to let them inspect her picture gallery ; and only when Lanny told her that she had real treasures and began to explain their qualities to his wife, did she realize that he was an exceptional person. On the field of the arts even the most implacable of enemies can lift their visors and salute each other.

The Hubert van Eyck was only about sixteen inches wide and twenty inches high, but a great deal had been crowded into that limited space. It represented a stained-glass church window, and so was art within art. It was done with extraordinary finesse and exactness, so that you forgot it was small and thought you were in church. It portrayed the Blessed Virgin seated upon a throne, clad in a jewelled robe of remarkable splendour, really almost good enough for an archbishop. Above her hovered three cherubim

who, presumably because they were young and active, didn't need any robes. Golden sunlight shone upon the varicoloured scene, and appeared to be as bright as when it had been painted more than five hundred years ago. It was marvellously contrived to look like glass and at the same time to look real.

Lanny never tried to do business in a cheap way, to depreciate what he was buying; no, indeed, he was an aristocrat among experts, and dealt only in what he could praise. He delivered his "spiel"—oddly enough, the Americans use that German word, while the Germans call it a "*Rolle*." He was trying to help his country to acquire worthy art works which might some day stimulate American painting. His clients were able to pay for the best; but naturally, there being many old masters, Lanny would recommend those which offered the most for the price. He explained that it was his practice never to make an offer for a painting; he invited the owner to state the price at which he or she was willing to sell, and he would cable that price to his client, and if the offer was accepted he would come in a day or two and pay the sum in cash.

The young expert examined several other paintings which the Baroninwitwe didn't say she would be unwilling to sell; he gave her a list of these, and would be pleased if she would quote him a price on each. He wasn't wasting his time or hers, for while he examined them he was busily thinking of persons who might purchase this and that. He left the severe old lady his addresses in Berlin and England; and when they had left the mansion and were driving past the potato-fields, Irma said: "Do you think she wishes to sell?"

He answered: "It depends upon the state of her mortgages." He explained that most of these estates had been loaded down with debts in war-time; many of them had come under the shadow of the *Osthilfe* scandal, which had had so much to do with the Nazis' getting into power.

Irma had heard talk of this affair, but had paid no attention to it, so Lanny told how the government of the Republic had paid vast sums to the great Prussian landlords to help in reconstruction, and most of the money had been wasted. Hindenburg's son had been involved, and that had helped to break down the old President and force him into a deal with the "Bohemian corporal," as he had been accustomed to call the founder and Führer of National Socialism. The question whether this van Eyck would ever be viewed in the United States might depend upon whether the aunt of Seine Hochgeboren had been able to collect her share of this respectable German graft.

VI

They returned to Berlin, arriving late in the evening. Next morning Lanny attended to his mail, and Irma telephoned some of her fashionable friends and was invited to lunch with the Fürstin Donnerstein. Lanny was invited, too, but he said that the ladies were much happier when they were able to gossip alone, so he would go and have a preliminary look at the Salon. It so happened that this was Tuesday, the 6th of November, the day on which, exactly at noon, he was supposed to be standing on a certain street corner in a working-class district of this *Hauptstadt* of Naziland. It happened also to be Election Day in the land of Lanny's forefathers, and Robbie Budd was predicting that the American people would come to their senses and elect a Congress opposed to the lunacies of the New Deal:

If a handsome young *Ausländer*, wearing a neatly trimmed little brown moustache and a fall overcoat to match, goes driving in a sports-car in a part of Berlin given up to six-storey tenements inhabited by the poor, he will attract some attention, but not so much as you might suppose. The poor do not go strolling on work days, and they have their problems to think about; at noon they are hurrying to get something to eat and do not linger outdoors on a raw gusty day. If a young *Herrschaft*, as such a stranger is called, parks his car and gets out and strolls, they will glance at him with a moment's curiosity, but no more; some *Strassenjunge* may follow him and beg for a pfennig, but that is all. If he stops on the corner and raises his hat to a slender and frail-looking young woman wearing a worn and drab coat and a felt hat with no ornaments, that will cause no sensation, for the poor people of all city streets have learned the facts of life and accept them. If they see the woman acknowledge the greeting and start to walk along with the man, the *Polizei* will not interfere, and everyone else will make allowances, knowing that life has been terribly hard for the women of Germany for a full two decades.

However, this wasn't the customary sex encounter, but something which the Geheime Staats-Polizei might have paid a small fortune to know about. Lanny Budd was saying: "So it's you, Trudi!" And Trudi Schultz, staring straight before her, was murmuring: "You may trust Monck. I know him well."

"Are you really sure?" Lanny persisted.

"I would trust him as much as any person I know."

"I ought to be told a little about him, Trudi——"

"Frau Mueller," she corrected, with a swift glance behind them. "Tell me where I can communicate with you through the next weeks."

"I expect to be in England until just before Christmas and then to return to my home in France. My mail will always be forwarded."

"Are you reasonably sure of its not being opened?"

"As much as anyone can be. No one in my home tampers with it." Trudi had met Irma and knew her attitude.

"Thank you with all my heart, Herr Schmidt. It is very important to us all. And now I ought to go. We are too conspicuous, walking together."

"I want very much to have a talk with you, Frau Mueller. I have come a long way for it. Can't you let me drive you for a while?"

"It is a dreadful risk to take!"

"I cannot see how. You go on walking down this street and I will get my car, and after I make sure I'm not being followed, I'll come up behind you and stop. You step in, and we'll be gone out of sight before anybody has time to give a thought to us."

"I will attract attention in your car; I'm not dressed for anything so elegant."

"They will think I am taking home a new cook." Lanny could grin even at such a tense moment; he still hadn't suffered enough.

"They will think something less polite," replied the young woman. "But—all right, I will go on walking until you come."

VII

They drove, and no one paid any attention to them. Soon they were out in the country, where there was no possibility of being overheard, so they could drop the feeble disguise of "Mueller" and "Schmidt." Trudi could look at him without fear, and he could take a glance at her now and then when driving permitted. As an art lover he had said that her features represented a triumph of some idealistic sculptor; he had never seen a woman's face more expressive of high thinking and fine feeling. When he had first met her four years ago, a student of drawing and a Socialist devotee, he had been struck by her look of alertness, of concentration upon whatever new idea was presented to her; by the way she held her head—high-spirited was the term he had chosen to describe her.

She made him think of a pure-bred racehorse ; watching her at work and seeing her intense concentration and delight in achievement, he had thought : " Here is a real talent, and I must help it to recognition."

In those far-off happy days it had been possible to believe in ideas, and to discuss them freely, and to feel sure that in the long run the soundest would prevail. In those days before Hitler, Trudi Schultz had had colour in her cheeks, colour that came and went with the excitement of achieving a good portrait or with the discussion of Socialism versus Communism, democracy versus dictatorship. Ludi and Trudi—Lanny had been amused by the musical combination—had argued as Lanny himself had so often done, that the reason there were so many splits and so little real co-operation among the left-wing groups was not so much conflict of ideas as of personalities ; the lack of tolerance and open-mindedness, of the old-fashioned virtues of unselfishness and love. The reason one advocate could see no good in the other's point of view was that both were jealous and greedy for power ; the movement was racked and rent because men thought about themselves and not about the masses they professed to serve. Listening to this ardent young couple at a gathering of the intelligentsia in the school which he and Freddi Robin were helping, Lanny had thought : " This is the true German spirit, which Beethoven and Schiller dreamed of spreading over the world. *Alle Menschen werden Brüder !*"

Now Ludi was gone, and his wife was a fear-ridden, grief-tormented soul, who had not had a moment of real peace or happiness for a year and a half. She twisted her hands together as she talked ; her finely chiselled nostrils quivered, and now and then tears would start in her eyes and run down her cheeks untouched. These cheeks were colourless, and Lanny could be sure that her work, whatever it was, left her no time and perhaps no money to eat properly. He would have liked to suggest taking her somewhere for a meal, but he knew this would be an intrusion and an error of taste.

She wanted to bring him to the same state of mind as herself, to make it impossible for him also to enjoy peace or happiness. Since she was taking the risk of being seen with him on streets and highways, she would put the occasion to use by impressing upon his mind the tragic need of help under which she and her comrades laboured. She would persuade him to lend his powerful aid in saving Ludi if he was still alive, or if he had perished, in saving his comrades and his cause.

VIII

Lanny had never had a chance to tell any of these German friends what he himself had seen and experienced. Now he listened to the familiar tale of cruelties beyond the imagining of decent human beings. Trudi told him about the fate of this person and that whom he had met at the school receptions. Pale and shivering with horror, she declared :

"They seize men and women, old and young—they respect nobody. They carry them off to the woods outside the city and beat them to death and bury them where they lie or leave them for others to find and bury. They drag them into dungeons which they have in the cellars of police stations and party headquarters, where they torture people to make them confess and name their friends and comrades. Things happen, so hideous that you cannot bring yourself to talk about them ; nothing worse was ever done by the Spanish Inquisition, or by Chinese torturers, or by savage Indians in America."

"I have heard a lot about it," responded Lanny. He decided not to say more at present.

"Germany has become a land of spies and betrayers ; you never know whom you can trust. They teach the children in the schools to spy upon their parents and denounce them ; they torture perfectly innocent people because of something some relative has done. No servant can be trusted, no employec, hardly a friend. It is impossible for half a dozen persons to meet, even in a private home ; one dares not express an opinion or even ask for news. You never know at what moment of the day or night will come a banging on the door, and it's a band of Stormtroopers, or the Gestapo with one of their vans to carry you away. You live in the shadow of this awful thing and can never get it out of your mind. Because I am a woman, and because they have so many sadists and degenerates among them, I carry a vial of poison, ready to swallow it before they can lay hands upon me."

"Listen, Trudi," he said. "Why don't you let me help you to get out of this country ?"

"And desert my husband ? Oh, Lanny, you must know I couldn't do that !"

"I hate to say it, but what is the chance of his being alive and not having been able to send word to you for a full year and a half ? Surely some of his fellow-prisoners must have been released !"

"You can't tell anything about it, Lanny. Everything happens

in the dark. They have people in their solitary dungeons whose names are not known. And even if I knew that Ludi was dead, I would have to stay for the sake of the others. How can I rest while my dearest friends are undergoing these torments and in such dreadful need of help ? ”

“ But can't you perhaps help them better from the outside ? ”

“ I have watched the exiles, from Russia and other countries ; they are impotent people, cut off from their roots. They lose all sense of reality. They become strangers to their own people. They live in a little false world all their own.”

“ But you are an artist. You could put what you know and what you feel into your work. You could be another Käthe Kollwitz.”

“ Some people have to stay here and keep the spark of freedom alive. There are millions of Germans who need us—all the old party comrades, and those who voted for us, the workers and the intellectuals. Most of the time we do not know who they are, but they are still alive and surely have not forgotten all that we taught them in the old days.”

“ But how can you reach them, Trudi ? ”

“ That is something you ought not ask. I am under a solemn oath not to give a hint of our methods without the consent of two other comrades ; and if I ask their consent and reveal you to them, there is one more chance of a leak. I don't mean that you might talk about us, but somebody else might and cast the burden upon you ; we might be betrayed, and someone might decide that you were to blame. You must realize how it is—we may have a Gestapo agent working among us right now, and so your name would become known to them. It is ever so much better as it is, with no one knowing about you but Genosse Monck and myself.”

“ All right,” said Lanny. “ You know that I trust your word.”

“ I give you my assurance that we have a way of reaching the people, and telling them the truth about what is going on in Germany and in the outside world. We have told them the truth about the Reichstag fire, and about the number of those murdered last June and July. The Nazis admit less than one hundred, but we have listed more than twelve hundred and our lists have been circulated. The Nazis know that, and of course they are hunting us day and night ; so far I do not think they have any clue. Even if they get some group it will be small ; we have built ourselves like the worm, which can be cut into sections and each will go on growing by itself. We are bound to succeed in the end, because a great people will not let themselves be dragged down into such degradation.”

IX

Lanny Budd had done some reading in the literature of martyrdom. He knew that liberty has nowhere been won without blood sacrifice, and now he was learning that it cannot be kept without further payments. Through his mind would come at times a procession of verses which he had read and learned: his Shakespeare, his Milton, his Byron; also *Egmont*, *Wilhelm Tell*, *Die Räuber*—there had been lovers of freedom in Germany, too. Kurt Meissner had taught his American friend some verses about the Tirolese innkeeper Andreas Hofer, who had taken Innsbruck by storm from the forces of Napoleon; when the students came in a festival and wanted to sing his hero deeds, he made them a speech, one line of which Lanny had never forgotten: "*Wir sind all des Todes Eigen*"—we are all death's own.

A grown-up American playboy realized that this was an important moment in his personal life. Something inside him was humbled and shamed, and he felt that he wanted to live the second half of his life to better purpose than the first. He said: "Just what is it you wish of me, Trudi?"

"There are many ways you can help us abroad. We may not always be as successful as we are now, and we may need such things as radio valves or a printing-press or paper, things it would be too dangerous to obtain here at home. For the moment, our great need is money. Monck has told me what you said about your own position——"

"Never mind what I said, Trudi," broke in the grandson of Budd's, in one of these emotional moments to which idealists are liable. "I'll get you some money now and then. I'll take it as my job."

So here he was, pledging himself again; forgetting that he was a married man, that other people had claims upon him, a vested interest in him; taking upon himself that task which Irma considered the height of lunacy, the overthrowing of the National Socialist government of Germany. It would become his job to earn the money, and a handful of social outlaws hiding in tenement rooms were going to print leaflets or something, and perhaps poke them under doors or leave them on park benches, and by this means overcome the power of the Geheime Staats-Polizei, of the Sturmabteilung and the Schutzstaffel and the Wehrmacht, with their enormous armaments, their tens of thousands of highly trained experts, their incessant watchfulness and skill in torturing and killing!

"I ought to have some way of reaching you, Trudi," he said.

"I have racked my brains to think of a safe way. I am a poor working woman, living in a tenement, and I would not dare receive letters from abroad. Nor do I want to trust anybody else with the secret about you."

"Can Monck come to England or France now and then?"

"He can arrange it, but it is difficult and risky. How often are you in Germany?"

"I never intended to come at all, until I got your message. However, I can arrange to come occasionally."

"That would be expensive for you, Lanny."

"I travel on my wife's money," he told her, with a smile. "She wishes it that way, and I have long since abandoned my scruples in the matter. I tell myself that hers is capitalist money—she doesn't have to earn it and it is her pleasure to spend it. Most of what I earn I will bring to you."

"Won't your wife wonder what you are doing with so much?"

"Happily, the idea will not occur to her. It is the mark of elegance among the rich that you do not bother your head with money. If the whim takes me, I buy a picture and put it in my storeroom, and I may not remember to mention it to my wife."

"It sounds quite fabulous. People of our sort cannot imagine such a way of life."

"I have had opportunity to observe the effects of inherited wealth, and for the average young person it is a sentence to futility and boredom. It cuts the mainspring of activity; the person no longer has to do anything, and so he doesn't, and if he tries, he fails nine times out of ten. You at this moment are providing the strongest incentive to labour that I have ever had in my life."

She couldn't keep from smiling. "Lanny, you are an angel! If I believed in such, I would be certain that you had been sent from heaven."

"I am planning just now to purchase three of these celestial creatures. They are cherubim, which I believe is a high order in the hierarchy; but they have no overcoats and I cannot imagine them in the climate of Berlin in the month of November."

X

The angel from overseas was moved to tell his friend about his visit to the Baroninwitwe, and by this means succeeded in amusing her for several minutes. He mentioned that the price of the picture could hardly be less than a hundred thousand marks, and so, if he

sold it, he would have several thousand for the comrades. The question was, how was he to get it to her ?

Trudi could think of no safe way for them to meet except as they had just done. She gave him the name of a street crossing close to her own home, so that she could without great trouble arrange to pass there at noon every day. "I will arrange to do my marketing at that time," she told him. "The only thing that will keep me away is being ill, and in that case I will write you that I cannot send any drawings at present."

Said he : "It would be inconvenient if you were ill on the day when I had a large sum for you. Therefore, you can do a service to the cause by keeping well."

"I will do my best, Lanny——"

"I impose a condition as part of our bargain : that you pledge yourself to use part of the money to purchase one litre of milk per day and drink every drop of it yourself. You show that you need it, and this is to be considered doctor's orders."

"All right," she said gently ; then, after a pause : "When you see me on the street, do not speak to me, but watch in what direction I start to walk ; then you may get your car and follow me, and after a couple of blocks you may stop for me. I will walk on the right side of the street and will be carrying a package. If I carry it in my left arm, so that you can see it, you will know that it is all right to stop ; but if I carry it in my right arm, it means there is something wrong, and you will drive on round the block, and not stop until the package is held in the crook of my left arm."

"*Sehr klug !*" he said, amused. "And now one thing more : suppose I am able to get you quite large sums of money, could you put them to use ?"

"What do you mean by large ?"

"A hundred thousand marks."

"*Herrgott !*" she exclaimed. "I never thought of anything like that !"

"It may not be easy to spend large sums without attracting attention. Do you handle them yourself, or do you pass them on to others ?"

"Mostly I pass them on."

"And won't these others be curious as to where you get them ?"

"Naturally ; but they know they are not free to ask."

"They doubtless remember that you know me. Won't they think of me as the possible source ?"

"No, for they have read about you in the Nazi press. They'd be more apt to think of the Robin family."

"How much money can you handle effectively at present?"

"I hadn't expected to meet that question. Two or three thousand marks at a time, I should think."

"And how often?"

"We could spend that every month, if we had it."

"All right," he said; "here is some to start things going." He took from his pocket a package containing a couple of thousand marks and slipped it into her hand. "Don't make the mistake of moving too fast," he warned. "Spending money is a conspicuous thing, and the larger the sum, the greater will be your risk. I'd hate to be the cause of your having to drink the contents of that vial."

XI

During the year and a half that Lanny Budd had been living a double life he had been troubled by the thought of what his friends in Berlin must be thinking about him. There was no help for it—except for this one comrade, and he wanted to make certain about her. "Listen, Trudi," he said. "It may be a long time before I see you again, and there are some things I want you to have clear in your mind."

He took her back some thirteen years, to the early days of the Nazi movement, when Kurt Meissner had introduced him to a son of the head forester of Stubendorf, a young enthusiast who had loaded him with literature of the movement, and later on had taken him to call on Hitler. He had taken him a second time a year ago; and Trudi said she had read about that visit in the papers; all the comrades knew of it.

"Of course they assume that I'm a renegade," he remarked.

"They don't know what to think," she answered. "They know that you saved Freddi Robin."

"Let them stay in uncertainty. You know how I make my money, and to do that I have to meet persons in power. I took one of the Detazo paintings to Hitler in Munich, and that fact was worth a small fortune to me in sales and in the opportunity to go where I pleased and to meet the right people in Germany. That is the world we live in. All I want to be sure is that you understand, and that no matter what I do, you will not doubt my good faith."

"I promise that, Lanny."

"In the course of my efforts to help the Robin family, I achieved the honour of a personal acquaintance with General Göring. He seemed to take a fancy to me—I admired his prowess, and he found pleasure in displaying it. That might be useful some day."

"It sounds utterly fantastic, Lanny."

"In every revolution and in every war there have been men playing a double role and dealing with both sides. It isn't according to my taste, but I am beginning to see possibilities in it. My father is going in for the manufacture of aeroplanes, and he will be expecting me to be useful to him; in return I may feel justified in making him useful to me. I don't want to say any more about this, except to be sure that whatever happens, you will not mention your connection with me or your knowledge of my role."

"I'll die before I do it, Lanny."

"I have an idea which may be worth while and about which I would like your advice. You know that the fat General seized the palace of my Jewish friends, and you know the fine paintings which were a part of his loot. It happens that Zoltan Kertezsi and I selected nearly all those paintings, and it would be easy to find a market for them in America; they might bring several million dollars, and there would be a commission of ten per cent. That is one way by which I could get large sums of money for you, and it would amuse me to persuade an old-style Teutonic robber-baron to contribute to his own undoing."

"*Knorke!*" exclaimed the woman.

"There is this drawback, that Göring would be getting nine marks for every one that I got. Thus I might be strengthening the Nazi cause far more than I was hurting it. What if he used the money to buy my father's aeroplanes?"

Trudi thought before answering. "He will buy the planes with the money of the German people, never with his own. For himself he is building a grand estate on a peninsula up in the North Sea. He is a greedy hog, and I do not believe he would give a pfennig to the government, but rather take away all that he dares."

"Then it wouldn't be a mistake to offer to sell his pictures?"

"If he wishes to sell them he could do it without your help—isn't that true?"

"Yes, no doubt."

"Well, then, let him spend what he pleases upon his own glory, and we will use our share to tell the German people what lives their false leaders are living."

"O.K.," said the American—a phrase which is understood wherever the "movies" go. "I may have the honour of being invited to that estate, which he is calling Karin hall in honour of his deceased wife. If I succeed in becoming his art adviser, I will appear in the next few days at our rendezvous wearing a feather in my hat!"

"Not too large a feather!" said the anxious woman outlaw.

6

On Top of the World

I

LANNY went dutifully to the Salon, and then, returning to the hotel, reported to his wife that he had found a new painter who impressed him greatly. She for her part was full of news about the doings of important personalities in Berlin, a lot of it scandalous ; but repeating it wasn't regarded as anti-Nazi activity—you did that in whatever world capital you were visiting. Human nature was the same everywhere, only worse the farther you came towards the east ; now, somewhat alarmingly, the east appeared to be coming westwards.

Lanny said : " A bright idea has hit me : all those pictures that Göring got from Johannes, he probably doesn't care about them and might like to have them sold."

" Do you suppose he would let you ? " exclaimed the wife. She realized that this would keep her charge out of mischief for a long while.

" It can't do any harm to offer. I thought I'd call up Furtwaengler."

" Don't mention what you have in mind," said the cautious wife.

He called the official residence of the Minister-Präsident of Prussia, and found the young staff officer disengaged. He and Lanny always outdid each other in politeness, almost like two Japanese, and now they went to it over the telephone. The Oberleutnant said that he had read of Lanny's arrival and intended to call him up ; Lanny said : " I have got the better of you." He asked after the officer's family, and about his health, and that of Seine Exzellenz the Minister-Präsident General—he had a long string of titles, but four were enough for ordinary conversation. Furtwaengler replied : "*Er sitzt auf der Spitze der Welt,*" and added : " I believe that is good American." Lanny guessed that this was another case of cinema influence.

" If you are free this evening why don't you run over to dinner ? " said the subtle intriguer. " Bring your wife, if you think she would enjoy it."

Irma dressed herself in raiment fine but scanty, and Lanny in

tails ; the staff officer appeared in his black and silver dress uniform with the white skull and crossbones, and his tall and angular country wife in a low-cut gown which revealed her shoulder-bones both front and back. A good *couturier* would not have let her make these disclosures, but she was the daughter of a cheese-manufacturer from Pomerania and didn't yet know her way about *die grosse Welt*. In Prussia wives have to pay for their husbands, and then for the most part they stay at home and devote themselves to their three K's, which in English are three C's : Cooking, Children, Church.

II

In that large and elegant hotel dining-room, with obsequious waiters bowing around them and exposing dishes of steaming-hot foods, Irma presented an expurgated version of the conversation of the Fürstin Donnerstein, while Lanny mentioned casually his intimacy with French financiers and revealed himself living next door to an English castle and dropping in informally upon staff members of the Foreign Office. When the four were alone in the drawing-room of the Budd suite, the two ladies sat in one corner and talked about ladies' affairs, while Lanny expatiated upon the menace of French foreign policy and the untrustworthiness of French political careerists.

The Oberleutnant in his turn talked about the one and only party and its plans and hopes. A strange thing, to which Lanny could never entirely adjust his mind : the young S.S. man knew that his American host had penetrated to the very heart of the party's treachery and cruelty, had witnessed soul-shaking sights and lost one of his dearest friends to the Nazi terror ; but the fat General, Furtwaengler's boss, had seen fit to take it all as a joke, and the staff officer had apparently decided that it had been a joke to Lanny as well. A curious quirk in their psychology, which an outsider had to try hard to understand : their collective egotism was such that they were rendered incapable of understanding other people's minds, and in spite of their utmost cunning they remained naïve and vulnerable ; as if a man should put on heavy armour for battle, but leave a large opening over his solar plexus.

The National Socialist German Working-men's Party had achieved in the past two years such triumphs as had never before been known in history. They knew they were going on to fresh triumphs ; they had it in their hearts and were full of the *élan* which it gave them, the "strength through joy." They sang

exultant songs about the future, they dressed themselves in fine uniforms and paraded with banners celebrating it, they organized colossal and magnificent pageants to tell all the world; they were quite literally intoxicated with their own grandeur. "Germany belongs to us to-day, to-morrow the whole world"—and how can the world fail to enjoy the prospect as much as we?

Here came these two Americans—rich, to be sure, but what is mere wealth compared with titles and honours, fame and glory, vision and *Geist*? Wealth is an incidental, one of the rewards of courage and daring; all the wealth of the world lay exposed before the Nazis, as Pizarro had found it in Peru and Clive in India. This American pair had the wit to see what was coming and to climb on to the Aryan bandwagon. They enjoyed the privilege of meeting Seine Exzellenz the Minister-Präsident of Prussia, Reichsminister of the German Empire, Air Minister, Commander-in-Chief of the German Air Force, Chief Forester of the Reich, Reich Commissioner, and so on and on; they were permitted to address him informally, to joke with him and share some of his confidences. How could they fail to be overwhelmed by the honour, and to march in spirit in his triumphal progress?

Lanny had ordered the best champagne for dinner, and afterwards he served brandy and liqueurs, and while sipping them lightly himself he kept his guest's glasses full. So the blond young Aryan's face became rosier than ever and his talk more naïve. He revealed the fact that Germany was going to win the Saar plebiscite; the matter had been arranged with German thoroughness and everything would go through *planmässig*. He didn't go so far as to say that the murder of Barthou had been arranged, but he remarked with a smile that it was certainly most convenient, and that in future French politicians would be more cautious in their policy of *Einkreisung*. He expatiated at length upon the wonders of the last Party Day, and became lyrical in describing the ecstatic state of mind of the rank and file. *Sieg heil! Sieg heil!*

So at last, when Lanny Budd, associate of noble lords and multi-millionaires, thought it safe to remark: "I have some information which might be of interest to Seine Exzellenz," the Oberleutnant did not hesitate for a moment, but said: "*Herrlich, Herr Budd!* I will speak to him the first thing in the morning."

Afterwards, when Herr Budd told his fashionable lady about this success, she remarked: "My God, we certainly paid a price for it! Can you imagine anything duller than that poor country gawk he drags along with him?"

III

The old-style Teutonic robber-baron sat in the sumptuous private apartment of his official residence, the room with the large black table and the gold curtains of his own designing; however, the lion cub had been banished, having grown too big for play-acting. The vast bulk of the Minister-Präsident General was covered in one of those gorgeous uniforms, to the designing and construction of which so large a share of the clothing industry of the Reich was now devoted. This one was of pale blue with a darker blue stripe, and insignia of which Lanny did not know the meaning. Whatever the uniform, the wide sash was never omitted, and the large gold star with eight points hanging from two white ribbons.

"*Ja, Lanny!*" bellowed the fat man when he saw his guest. His broad face with heavy jowls, usually sullen, lighted up with pleasure, and he seized the American with a large moist hand—but not flabby—grab it hard to protect yourself! It pleased his whim to be genial in the presence of this favourite of fortune, of whom he had made use in an especially successful coup, the plundering of one of the richest *Judschweine* in Germany. Surely it couldn't be that Hermann Wilhelm Göring laughed loudly in order to conceal embarrassment!

"*Grüss Gott, Hermann!*" responded Lanny, seeing that he had been advanced in social status.

"*Also!*" exclaimed the fat warrior. "You are on the way to becoming a crown prince of the air lanes!"

Lanny was taken aback and showed it. "You have indeed a good secret service," he remarked.

"Did you ever doubt it?" queried the host. Then, more seriously: "Your father should come to see me; it might be to our mutual advantage."

"*Na, na!*" smiled Lanny. "You are not financing any aeroplane factories outside the Reich."

"*Aber,*" countered the Air Minister, "we buy planes, and would buy more if they were good."

"One for a sample?" retorted the other. He knew he was supposed to be impudent; he was the court jester.

"How can you say such a thing? Who could ever say that I took anything without paying for it?"

"Who could say it if I couldn't?"

At this the stout General turned into a Kris Kringle, whose round belly shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly. It was

to be doubted if anyone had had the nerve to address him in that fashion for many a long day.

"*Setze dich, Lanny,*" he said, in fatherly fashion. "Seriously, tell Robert Budd that if he gets that thousand-horsepower engine, I will lease his patents and he won't have to argue about the price."

It was quite disconcerting. Lanny felt himself enveloped in a net of espionage, and shuddered inwardly, thinking of Trudi. But then he realized that Robbie had been talking his project all over Paris and London, and of course Göring's agents would have sent him word. But what a contrast in efficiency! Robbie had been to consult the authorities both in England and in his own country, and both had high-hatted him; but here this old German *Raubtier* sent for him and invited him to name his own figure! It boded ill—and especially since Lanny knew that Robbie would be apt to accept the invitation!

IV

This was a stag affair, and Irma had not been invited. They lunched at a table wheeled into the room, a meal consisting of a boiled turbot with thick rich sauce, and then of *Hasenpfeffer*. Apparently the great man didn't give any heed to notions of diet; he stuffed himself in the middle of the day, and pressed quantities of food upon his guest. He talked fast and with his mouth full, so that he was more repellent even than usual; but Lanny laughed at his jokes and admired his capacities and did not let himself be shocked by sexual anecdotes. When the waiters had served the food the General growled: "'R-r-raus!" and they vanished and did not return until he pressed a button.

Now was Lanny's opportunity to show that he could and would bring information of value to the military organizer of Naziland. He had given thought to the problem and chosen his course with care. He would never tell Hermann Wilhelm Göring anything that would be of real use to him—unless it was something that Hermann Wilhelm Göring was sure to know already. The visitor would be prodigal of information of this sort, and it would be accurate; so Seine Exzellenz might be kept on the alert, hoping for something new. If he asked directly, Lanny would say he didn't know, but would try to ascertain. How long he could make out with such a programme he couldn't guess; Rick had said: "Not very long," and Lanny had answered that any time the General grew tired of his society, he could find some more compliant *Spitzel*.

The host led the talk to France, and Lanny told him about the anti-Nazi fixation of Barthou and how greatly his fellow-plotters had been disconcerted by his death ; speaking to the man whom he suspected to be the real murderer, Lanny pictured the plight of a Foreign Minister who had interposed himself in the effort to save his royal guest and had been shot through an artery of the arm ; he might have been saved if any of his staff had had the wit to tie a handkerchief about the arm and turn it with a stick or a fountain-pen ; but no one had had such wit and he had slowly bled to death. Lanny went into the gory details, thinking he might be able to spoil the murderer's appetite for Moselle wine ; but no such effect was to be noted.

The visitor talked about the new Foreign Minister of France, whom one of his financial supporters had called a *fripon mongol*. The " rascal " part was true, Lanny said,; and as for " Mongolian," the innkeeper's son had learned to joke about it himself, because of his swarthy complexion, thick lips, and strangely slanted eyes. Göring asked if he really had Mongolian blood, and Lanny said : " Who could guess ? The races have been so mixed in that part of the world." Lanny knew exactly how to please a pure-blooded blond Aryan.

The visitor told what he knew about the character of Laval, and little of it was good. He talked about the two hundred families who were reputed to rule France, and expressed the opinion that Laval had become the two hundred and first and would from now on serve their interests automatically. " Their own wealth concerns them so deeply that they have no time to think about their country. It would not trouble them too greatly if you were to bomb the rest of it, provided you would agree to spare their mines and steel mills and other valuable properties."

" A good idea," said the wholesale killer. " I will take it up with them."

Lanny would have been worried if he hadn't felt certain that Göring had already done it.

v

The luncheon table was wheeled out, and the fat General lighted a fat cigar and settled back in a well upholstered chair in a pose of contentment. They were alone, and the time had come for a showdown. " Tell me, Lanny," said he, " have you given any thought to the idea of helping me now and then ? "

" I have given much thought to it, and I find it troubles me,

because I lack a sense of competence. I doubt my ability to be worth my keep."

"You might let me be the judge of that, my friend. I have had some experience in judging men."

"In this case you are far too generous. When one has been an idler for thirty-five years it is not so easy to change."

The judge of men fixed his gaze intently upon his guest. "Do you find yourself under any special strain at this moment?" he inquired.

Lanny smiled. "Only that I have eaten enough for two."

"I would ask you to do nothing but what you are doing now. It is your privilege to meet many persons who are of interest to me. I know that you are curious about them and amused to watch their minds work. Could you not find it worth while to come and tell me what you have observed? Suppose, for example, I should suggest that on your next visit to Paris you should cultivate Pierre Laval, study his temperament, and help me to understand what approach to him will be most effective?"

"Surely, Hermann, you have plenty of people doing that sort of work for you!"

"I have not tried to conceal the fact from you; but I do not know one of them I would trust so well as you."

Lanny, who hadn't been born yesterday, but something over twelve thousand yesterdays ago, knew exactly how much weight to give to such a remark. "You honour me," he said. "And, as I told you, so long as it is play, I can enjoy doing it. But if I accept compensation from you, at once I feel under pressure; I begin to wonder whether I am earning my salt, and decide that I am a complete *Taugenichts*!"

"Your New England conscience," said the fat General. "I have never before had an opportunity to observe it in operation."

"It is sometimes inconvenient to its owner," replied the grandson of the Puritans; "but those who deal with him find it useful."

"You must understand that we Prussians also have our code, though perhaps not the same. I should not feel comfortable asking favours of you unless I was in position to make some sort of return. Can you not tell me of anything you would accept?"

VI

• So Lanny had what he had been angling for, and it was time for him to jerk the hook. Said he promptly: "When you put the matter to me that way, Hermann, I will make you a straightforward

answer. I have what I suppose is a sort of profession ; at any rate it has enabled me to earn more than I need, and spares me the embarrassment of living on my rich wife. For lack of a shorter name I call myself a *Kunstsachverständiger*."

"I am informed as to your reputation," replied the Minister-Präsident ; and it appeared as if he considered himself the one to jerk the hook. "You may perhaps have heard that I am building a rather good hunting-lodge for my friends. I want to furnish the place adequately, and nothing would please me more than to have your advice on the subject. Would you undertake to buy some art works for me ?"

"What I had in mind was something different from that. I was thinking of the old masters which were in the palace of Johannes Robin. I don't know whether I ever mentioned it, but my associate and I selected and purchased those paintings."

"I have heard many comments upon the excellence of judgment displayed."

"We gave a great deal of study to the collection, and I think it really is good. My idea was that possibly your tastes might be different from mine, and you might care to turn some of those works into cash. I have prepared a list of what was paid for them, and would be glad to try to find purchasers at the same prices. It will cost you nothing, let me add."

"But I thought you were going to suggest some way by which I could reward you !"

"The purchasers would pay me ten per cent. commission. That is the basis on which I work with them."

"But isn't it fair that I also should pay ?"

"I have a rule which I have never broken, that I do not take commissions from both parties. I represent one or the other, and try to serve his interest."

"*Aber*—why shouldn't you serve *my* interest and let *me* pay the commission ?"

Lanny maintained his winning smile. "You are kind and I am grateful ; but it happens that I have a standing arrangement with several clients in America who are building up collections. They expect to add ten per cent. to the prices I quote them ; so why not let them go on doing so ?"

"*Famos !*" exclaimed Göring. "But mightn't I get higher prices with the help of your persuasive skill ?"

"I doubt it, for the reason that Johannes did his buying before the depression, and it will not be such an easy matter to find purchasers now. I am only offering to try, and am telling you in

advance that I may have to come and confess failure. Johannes was a man who wanted what he wanted, and more than once he insisted upon paying prices higher than I considered wise from the business point of view. On this list which I have prepared from my records I have stated the actual prices paid, and in a few cases I have pencilled in a lower figure, which I fear is the most I could advise any of my clients to pay now. It is, of course, for you to say whether or not you care to accept any of my suggestions."

"Tell me how you achieve these feats," said Göring. "Do your magical millionaires always pay whatever you tell them?"

"By no means. They have a habit of setting great value upon their money. They will ask: 'Are you sure it is worth that?' and I will reply: 'There is no fixed price for a work of art; it depends on how badly you want it.' Sometimes I am told to offer a lower figure, and then I take the cash and lay it on the table in front of the picture owner. I have observed that the actual sight of money exercises a kind of hypnotic effect upon many persons, and those who would resist a bank draft collapse in front of a packet of thousand-mark notes."

The Teutonic Falstaff was amused by this portrayal of human frailty. He called Lanny "*ein ganzer Kerl*," and said: "Give me the list and I'll look it over. A number of the paintings don't mean much to me, and maybe I'll turn you loose to plunder those plutocrats of yours."

VII

There was nothing to do now but wait—which wasn't such an ordeal with a suite in a de luxe hotel and every service at command. Smart Berlin society threw open its doors to an American "glamour girl," and after a half-dozen wardrobe trunks had arrived by express, she was ready to go day and night.

The prince consort arrayed himself according to the decrees of the fashion dictators, and accompanied his spouse to luncheons, *thés dansants*, and elaborate long dinners followed by music and dancing. He shook hands with numerous large gentlemen who seemed to have the bulk of whales and approximately their shape, starting with close-cropped heads and perfectly rounded all the way down, except for two or three deep creases at the back of their pink necks; their ladies were built on the same scale and had voices suited to Wagnerian opera—Lanny's irreverent imagination saw them in flowing white robes, galloping to the rocking-horse rhythm of the *Walkürenritt*. Their conversation was serious, and you

might give deep affront by mixing a *Hochgeborener* with a *Hochwohlgeborener* or addressing a *Frau Doktor* as an ordinary *Frau*.

The younger set was not so heavy, either in body or in mind ; they played golf and tennis, danced with spirit, and motored hither and yon ; they admired Americans, used American slang, and bore no grudges because of the war. Like the daughter of J. Paramount Barnes, they made their religion out of having a good time. They were not interested in politics—except for repeating some comical story about the leaders of the fantastic new *Regierung* ; when they had done that, they had proved themselves enlightened persons and could go on dancing. The *Regierung* rarely interfered with you if you had money and confined your witticisms to the right sort of people—those who also had money. When Lanny asked the grandson of one of the steel kings what he really thought about it all, the *Grünschnabel* answered : “ *Zum Teufel !* It’s a problem of getting the votes of millions of morons, and the Nazi way seems to suit them in my country.”

The larger magnates and their wives had decided ideas. For them the Hitler invention meant no more strikes or labour-union agitation, no more Reds fighting in the streets ; it meant wages fixed and permanent, resulting in such prosperity as heavy industry had never before known. In short, the Third Reich was the magnate’s dream, and Lanny was struck by the curious resemblance of their conversation to that of his father. The only difference was that they had it while Robbie longed for it but didn’t know how to get it. The election in his homeland had gone in the opposite direction from what he had predicted, and his hope of putting restraint upon that man in the White House had gone glimmering. Robbie didn’t go so far as to ask for an American Hitler, but he took to predicting that one was coming, and if a likely candidate had presented himself and asked for funds he might not have been sent empty away.

The masters of Germany’s immense steel, coal, chemical, and electrical industries said a few formal words of regret over the excesses of their new government, but hastened to point out that such things always happen during any social readjustment. They added that all Germany needed now was to have her lost territories restored, and then Europe might be assured of a long period of peace and prosperity. Lanny wanted to say : “ Peace and prosperity based upon the all-out manufacture of armaments ? ” but those were the things he had to keep locked up in the other half of his personality.

VIII

When an American playboy wearied of Berlin fashionable society, there were the art galleries and the concert halls. The Nazis had burned most of the worthwhile modern books and censored the art exhibitions, but collections of old masters stood untouched, and you could still hear Bach and Beethoven, Mozart and Brahms—if not Mendelssohn and Mahler and the other Jews. Lanny would turn his wife over to the smart ladies or to one of the eager young dancing men, and lose himself in the contemplation of masterpieces which spoke to him of that Germany he had known and loved as a youth and which, he told himself, survived in a region beyond the range of Nazi "Big Berthas" or the possible flight of General Göring's planes.

He went to a concert in the Philharmonie and heard a fine rendition of the Fifth Symphony. He gave up his soul to that of Beethoven, and felt himself lifted into a kind of divinity, endowed with new perceptions and powers; he shared in the struggle of mankind against those forces which have sought to block the upward progress of the race. He dreamed mighty dreams, and when the last notes of the glorious music had died he came back to the real world refreshed and strengthened for new efforts.

But Lanny was not the same trusting and happy lad who had first heard this classic art work; he had learned more about the world, and his thoughts were more complex. Looking about the concert hall at the men and women, young and old, who had been mystically made one with him, he observed that several of them wore Nazi uniforms, and what could that mean? Was it possible to transform Beethoven's passionate longings into any sort of Hitler ideology? To Lanny that appeared as the sin against the Holy Ghost; but evidently it had been committed, for the young Nazis looked just as inspired as the dreamiest *Mädchen* or the most reverent *Tonkünstler*. "*So pocht das Schicksal an die Pforte*," Beethoven had said; and what did those hammer blows of fate mean to a Stormtrooper? To what door was admission being demanded? Was it the French armies at the bridgeheads of the Rhine, or the Russians at the forts of East Prussia?

Hardly the best of thoughts to take into a concert hall! The alien rebel appealed to the soul of Beethoven on behalf of his cause, and the father of modern music told him that the knocking on the door was that of the Stormtroopers raiding the home of the Schultzes and dragging away Ludi and Freddi to torture and death. The

second theme, gently pleading, was the soul of Freddi, which would live on in Lanny Budd's soul for as long as he had one or was one.

The rebel's thoughts wandered and came to rest upon an anecdote which had been told him by a Dutchman with whom he had chatted on the packet-boat from Harwich to the Hook of Holland. A Nazi friend had been extolling to this Dutchman the conditions within the Hitler realm; there was such perfect order, and the streets were so clean; everybody had work and enough to eat; everybody knew his duty and did it gladly—and so on. "Ah, yes," the Dutchman had countered; "but when I hear a step on my front porch at four o'clock in the morning, I know it's the milkman!"

What was this strange duality in the soul of the German which made it possible for him to dream the noblest and holiest of dreams, and then go out and perpetrate the most hideous atrocities? What was it which had made Germany the land of Beethoven, Goethe, and Schiller, and at the same time the land of Bismarck, Hindenburg, and Schicklgruber alias Hitler? Evidently the German did not know how to harness his aspirations and make them work in his everyday life, especially political. He delighted in lofty abstractions expressed in the longest words and used like counters in a game, but without ever turning them into cash. His ideas were like the screws of a steamship during a violent storm; they race frequently in the air, failing to come into contact with the water and produce any motion in the vessel.

IX

One morning the mail brought a letter on old-fashioned stationery, bearing the crest of the Baron von Wiesenschmetterling. It informed Herr Lanning Budd that the Baroninwitwe would be pleased to consider an offer of one hundred and twenty-five thousand marks for the Hubert van Eyck painting. She wouldn't quote in dollars, of course, but at the then rate of exchange it was about fifty thousand. Irma thought it monstrous for such a tiny piece of canvas; but this was a real old master, two centuries older than Rembrandt. Lanny said it might call for dickering; to begin with he wrote a carefully studied note calling the old lady's attention to her phrasing and stating that he could not undertake the negotiations upon the basis of a promise to "consider." Might he have her assurance that if within the next thirty days he brought her the sum of one hundred and twenty-five thousand marks in cash the painting would be his?

While waiting for a reply, he escorted Irma to more entertainments ; until one morning he received a ceremonious visit from the Oberleutnant bringing him a note on the impressive stationery of the Minister-Präsident of Prussia, authorizing him to sell a list of paintings at various specified prices. A total of seventeen were listed, and the expert was amused to observe that they included all the Italians, most of the French, and several of the English, but none of the German, Dutch, or Flemish. There were conclusions of a political nature to be drawn from this. The Nazis were hoping to make friends with Holland and Belgium, but were in a state of intense irritation with Mussolini, who was busily intriguing with the Austrian government, seeking control of that near-bankrupt country. The fat Kommandant of the German Air Force had made a couple of trips to Rome, but with ill success according to all reports.

Irma, who knew the paintings, looked over the list and commented from another point of view : " He is keeping all the nudes ! " Yes, a psycho-analyst could have told a lot about an old-style robber-baron from that list of rejects. He didn't care anything about the Blessed Virgin or any such neglected females ; he didn't care for old people of either sex or for the proletariat of any tribe or colour. What he cherished was beautiful young women in scanty garments, and especially when they had large ruddy limbs, after the style of Rubens ; also princes, statesmen, and soldiers in gorgeous costumes, with jewels and lace and orders of whatever design. Did he intend putting these to use as fashion-plates ?

Anyhow, it was a job, though not an easy one, for all Lanny's suggestions of reduction in price had been overlooked, and a couple of the prices had been hiked. But Lanny had explained that he sometimes came back with counter-proposals, and presumably the Minister-Präsident was taking precautions. It could do no harm to bring him a lower offer ; his official executioner couldn't chop off the head of a *Kunstsachverständiger* who happened to be an American citizen. The total sum which Lanny was invited to contribute to the great man's exchequer was slightly more than a million marks, and even if he took Zoltan Kertezsi in on some of the deals, he would earn enough money to keep Trudi Schultz and her fellow-conspirators in funds for a year or two.

X

Lanny and his wife had a luncheon engagement, but he begged off in order to write letters and cablegrams. After Irma had departed, he decided upon a respite, and went for a drive into the

Moabit district. As his chariot rolled, his thoughts were busy with the second-in-command of the Nazis, trying to probe the mystery of this unusual acquaintanceship. Did Göring really believe that Lanny was friendly to his cause and would be willing to help him? It was hard to imagine. A wholesale murderer, with the guilt of the blood purge and the Reichstag fire and other crimes beyond the reckoning of history, would hardly be apt to take up casual friendships or fall victim to the charms of a dilettante of all the arts, including conversation. Having at command the greatest spying-organization in the world, he will hardly admit any person to his intimacy without knowing that person's record and connections. Could he fail to have learned about the Red uncle and the Pink school in Cannes, and that Lanny had got kicked out of Rome ten years ago; that he was a friend of Blum and Longuet and Steffens and others, and that his best chum was an anti-Nazi playwright? What could Göring be trying to get out of such a person?

A mystery complicated enough to make the plot of a melodrama for Eric Vivian Pomeroy-Nielson, if that fastidious highbrow would condescend to anything so far down in the dramatic scale. Was the Air Kommandant using Lanny as a preliminary to doing business with Lanny's father? Or did he have his eye on Irma's fortune, planning to get Lanny into a serious scrape and then plunder Lanny's wife as he had plundered Johannes Robin? Was he expecting to use him as a decoy, to draw members of the underground movement into the Gestapo's net? Trudi had vouched for Monck; but suppose Monck was fooling Trudi and getting ready to meet Lanny's friends and probe his secrets? All these were possibilities, and seemed more probable than the idea that this vain and cruel man was really enjoying the company of the grandson of Budd's.

Maybe they were following him here in Berlin! That at least was something he could make sure about; he drove his car round a block, and every time he turned a corner he watched in his little mirror to see if any other car made the same turn. None did; so he decided that he wasn't imperilling Trudi at present. He drove up the street which she had named, timing himself to pass the corner exactly at noon. There she was, also on the dot; walking on the right side of the street, and carrying a small package in the crook of her left arm, in plain sight as he drove up behind her. He passed her, going slowly, and in the next block drew up by the kerb and waited until she came along and stepped in. They drove on, and again he turned a corner and watched carefully; but there was no pursuit.

XI

"I didn't know where to get a feather," said Lanny; "but I got the job with the General."

He told her about the luncheon in the official residence, and to the woman it was a sort of ogre-story, a visit to Bluebeard's castle. "How could you swallow his food?" she exclaimed.

"I ate too much," he replied. "It was part of the job. If I go there often, you may see me looking like him."

"*Gott behüte!* What on earth do you talk about to such a man?"

"Mostly you listen to him talk. You find that it has to do with himself and his prowess, and of course with the army and especially with the air force he is building. He has a strong ego, and his aim in life is to compel other persons to submit to his will. He is much better company than some of the other Nazis, because he does not bore you with their jargon; he talks like a man of the world who is interested in power and assumes that you are sensible enough to understand that."

"It does not disturb his sleep that he has killed tens of thousands of persons and is having a hundred thousand tortured in prisons?"

"I am sure he sleeps as soundly as any other fat man. You must understand that he does not have our conception of human brotherhood. He is a professional killer of other men; he has been trained for it since youth. and during the World War it became the most exciting of games, in which he staked his life upon his skill. Frau Magda Goebbels called my attention to the fact that so many of the Nazi leaders have been airmen. It was a school for the making of initiative and daring, and for the eliminating of the scrupulous. I am sure that Göring would hesitate no more over eliminating you that you would over a bedbug."

"I am put in my place," said Trudi, managing a wry smile.

"Now this wholesale killer is conducting a school for young Nazis, teaching them initiative and daring. Incidentally, and indirectly, he is teaching the same thing to young working-class leaders. It is a harsh school."

She thought about that before she spoke again. "Tell me, Lanny, suppose you had a chance to address the workers of Germany—only one chance—just what would you say to them?"

The car rolled on for a block before he answered. "I believe I would point out to them that the increase in employment of which the Nazis boast is based entirely upon the manufacture of armaments; also, it depends upon the piling up of debts, and so it cannot

go on indefinitely. It can have but one end, another slaughtering of the workers."

"Suppose you had a chance to bring them some sort of message from the outside world, what would it be?"

"That the workers of France and England and America are of a pacifist disposition; they do not want to rearm their countries and they have succeeded in cutting down military budgets to a great extent. But of course if Germany goes on rearming, that will automatically force the neighbouring countries to follow suit. It is obvious that when a nation turns its whole substance into war materials, as Germany is doing now, the time will come when that nation has to go to war—it can do nothing else because it is equipped for nothing else, and it must use its armaments or else be suffocated under their weight."

"We do not get the Socialist papers from abroad any more, Lanny. Can you tell me of some foreign statesman who has said that, and who might be quoted?"

"Léon Blum has been saying it over and over, both in his speeches and in *Le Populaire*."

"Very well," said the woman. "We will attribute it to him. The next time you come into Germany, bring us some clippings like that; they will be useful."

"O.K.," said Lanny, somewhat offhand and without realizing that he was taking one more step towards trouble. Or maybe he knew but didn't wish to admit it to himself. Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and it is a common observation that when you have taken the first step through that gate and along that way, it becomes easier to take the second and the third.

XII

When Lanny got back to his hotel there was a cablegram, always an interesting event in the life of an art expert. Among Irma's Long Island acquaintances was a young matron known as "the princess of pickles"; she had inherited a block of stock in a great industry having to do with the canning and processing of foods. Two or three years ago Lanny had cabled her from Vienna about a Blessed Virgin by Jan van Eyck, and she had promptly forwarded the price. In due course she had discovered, as most of his clients did, that it was a beautiful thing and that owning it was a source of rare distinction. So, immediately upon receiving the quotation from the Baroninwitwe, Lanny had cabled this same client that she had an

opportunity to obtain a Blessed Virgin by the elder brother of Jan and thus be unique among American collectors so far as Lanny's knowledge went. Now came a reply that a hundred and twenty-five thousand marks had been placed to his account in one of the great banks of Berlin, but that he would be expected to get his commission out of this sum.

That was the kind of thing which made Irma Barnes so furious with the rich ; she called it "jewing down," and she said, what was five thousand dollars to Brenda Spratt ? Lanny grinned and said that if you counted it in the form of canned pork and beans it might amount to a wagon-load. He was used to all sorts of counter-proposals, and had seen one of his clients give up a priceless painting rather than pay the extra ten per cent. ; he added one of his father's favourite anecdotes, about a lady in Newcastle who had desired to sell her mansion but had refused because the purchaser insisted upon the curtains being included in the deal.

It would mean another trip to the Neumark, and one of those bargaining duels which Lanny had learned to enjoy. He performed a mathematical operation to determine the purchase price with his commission added. It worked out at one hundred and thirteen thousand six hundred and thirty-six marks and thirty-six pfennigs. It would sound better if he renounced his claim to the pfennigs and offered the Prussian lady an extra mark. He phoned to his victim and made an appointment to see her after lunch the following day ; also he phoned Zoltan about the deal, and told Irma that he had fixed it up with his colleague, who was supposed to have a client desiring the picture but unwilling to pay so high a price.

XIII

Lanny got a large bundle of crisp new notes from the bank and stowed them in an inside pocket ; he didn't have to worry about hold-ups, because in Germany the only kind was official, and if you possessed an American passport you were immune. They set out on a day of rain which turned to light snow before they got to their destination. The potato-fields were a vast magical blanket, suggesting a world where there had never been any suffering ; but it was an illusion, for if you had known how many thousands of human bodies had fertilized those fields through the centuries it would have ruined your appetite for "earth-apples," as the Germans call them.

In the drawing-room of the elderly stout aristocrat, overcrowded with things old enough to be valuable even though they were ugly,

Lanny played the game which had become his substitute for war. A poet had told the world that the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady were sisters under the skin; Lanny had never bought pictures from either of this pair, but he had bought them from members of the French, Spanish, German, Austrian, Polish, and Russian ruling classes, and had proved that their manners and morals were not even skin-deep when immense quantities of their country's currency were dangled before their eyes.

The Baroninwitwe von Wiesenschmetterling became indignant when she learned that this young American upstart had presumed to make an appointment and expect her to waste her time haggling over a few marks. She had set her price, and had written him a second note—not yet mailed—granting him an option. Why had he not told her over the telephone that he wished to try to force a reduction in her offer? Lanny said he was sorry. He had not understood that it would be an offence to make a counter-proposal; and after all, a hundred and thirteen thousand six hundred and thirty-seven marks was not a sum to be sneezed out of the room. He said it with his amiable grin, and added that he would be glad if he could leave the package behind him, because it was so heavy it had stretched his coat out of shape. He dragged it forth, and saw the Baroninwitwe's eyes grow larger—it was hardly likely that she had ever seen such an amount of cash in all her baronial life.

It was a struggle to the death of the noble lady's temper and very nearly of Lanny's endurance. "This is really an immense sum of money, *gnädige Baronin*; it cost a lot to cable so much to Germany and I'll hate to have to send it back. My client's statement is positive, and I know from previous experience that she will not change. Please be so kind as to read the cablegram." She refused, but when he put it into her hands, her curiosity got the better of her; this showed that she could change her mind and that she was not such a forbidding personality as she endeavoured to appear.

There was a table near her chair, and he unwrapped the package on it. "I want you to realize that this is not stage money," he said. "This, as you will see, is the bank's own label—in this bundle are fifty one-thousand-mark notes, and here is another of the same; and this smaller collection makes the complete sum. In my ten years' experience as a *Kunstsachverständiger* it has rarely happened that I have handled so large an amount of money——"

"*Aber*—never before have you had a Hubert van Eyck!" She almost screamed it.

"I have purchased a Blessed Virgin by Jan van Eyck from a relative of yours—and for a much smaller sum."

"I know, I know, but that is not the same! You realize it as well as I do."

They argued the merits of the two Flemish brothers and the comparative rarity of their works. Here was a treasure unknown to the art world, a family possession for three hundred years, and he came and tried to shop for it as if he were buying the old clothes of her major-domo! When she said that, Lanny decided to resort to the last extreme. He put the bundles of money together and said, with dignity: "I am sorry, *gnädige Baronin*, that I have wasted so much of your time." Irma, who had been sitting motionless, a statue of silent contempt, arose, and the two of them started to take their leave. "I shall be leaving for England to-morrow," he said.

Lanny had known men who could stand that, but never a woman whom it had not broken down. "*Gut denn!*" said the noble widow, torn between greed and rage. "I'll meet you half-way. I'll split the commission with you. You may have five per cent. and pay me the balance."

"I have brought no more with me than I have shown you, and I am not in a position to change my offer. I have to divide my commission with my associate——"

"But what have I to do with that?"

"If he has assisted me, he has earned his share."

"But what have you yourself done in the matter? You have made two trips here, you have written me one letter and sent one cablegram to your client—that is all!"

"*Verehrte Gnädige*, you overlook the most important detail: I have spent a matter of ten years learning to do these things. I have not merely learned the names and addresses of persons who are willing to take my word for paintings, but I have established a character so that they trust me. Do you think you could find, anywhere on this earth, a person who would cable you one hundred and twenty-five thousand marks to buy a painting which the person had never seen or even heard of until your message arrived?"

They had an argument standing on their feet. Irma was disgusted, and started to go out to the car, and that was good.

"I'll tell you what I'll do—my last offer! I'll allow you ten thousand marks, and you pay a hundred and fifteen thousand. *Einverstanden?*"

This was cheese-paring, and she must have known it. But don't make the mistake of being impolite, for she might become really mad! "*Verehrte Baronin*," said Lanny, in the kindest tone he had in his repertoire, "you have a lovely and rare painting and I have

not tried to conceal my admiration for it. I have offered you a very high price, and I think I have done well for you. I also think that I have earned my proper share. I have never in my life cut my own commission, because I know that the work I do is honest and is worth the price. If you accept my offer you will count this large sum of money, and then sign the bill of sale in triplicate, after which I will hand you the money with one hand and you hand me the picture with the other, and we will both be better off than we are now."

He had to walk all the way to the front door of the mansion and had begun to be seriously worried; but finally she said: "*Also gut—kommen Sie zurück!*" She sat down and counted every one of the notes, stopping to wet her fingers for every two or three. She signed the documents, and Lanny wrapped the Blessed Virgin in a piece of oil-cloth which he had brought. He was about to take his departure when she became suddenly human and invited the young couple to a *Teegesellschaft*. But Irma had gone out to the car, and he was afraid she would refuse to come back; she wasn't very well, he said, and they desired to get back to Berlin before dark.

XIV

"Oh, that odious woman!" exclaimed the heiress, whose money had come so easily.

"I have met worse," said Lanny, well content.

The wife would have liked to say: "I can't comprehend why you insist upon going through such scenes, for the small sums you get out of it." But Emily Chattersworth had urged her to forgo these criticisms and let Lanny play the game which he had mastered. Instead she remarked: "I really can't see why you should pay anything to Zoltan. He hasn't helped with this deal, has he?"

Lanny didn't wish to tell what Zoltan's help had really been. He said: "I'll offer to pay him, but I know he won't take it."

"Another thing," added Irma. "You've got your money into Germany, and how will you get it out?"

"It can stay for a while," he replied. "Sooner or later I'll see a painting that I want."

There was no need to say more, for Irma would have forgotten about it in a few hours. He drove next morning and drew ten thousand marks from the bank and went to the rendezvous with Trudi Schultz, omitting no precautions. He staggered her when he put this sum into her hands. "It'll save my having to come again so soon."

"But, Lanny, how am I to keep so much money?"

"Find some hiding-place in your room—one where the Gestapo won't think to look."

"But suppose the house should burn down."

"If that happens," he smiled, "be sure you get out, and don't bother about the money. I can get more—but I can't get another Frau Mueller!"

7

Spirits of Just Men

CHRISTMAS at Wickthorpe Lodge was a delightful occasion, with friends coming and going, messengers bringing gifts, surprises being planned, a rushing here and there with artificially created excitement. Bright fires blazed in every room and the house was warm, the way Irma liked it. It meant servants coming with full coal-scuttles and going with empty ones; but that was no trouble in this delightful land where prompt cheerful attendants could be had at ridiculous wages. Lanny, the economic determinist, said it was the English land system, which excluded the country people from their birthright; but he had learned not to make "grouchy" remarks in the presence of his wife, and especially not at the season when peace and good will were supposed to prevail.

Beauty came from London with her husband. She and her daughter-in-law got along famously, the older deferring to the younger and doing everything to turn the spotlight upon her; it was according to her code that the world existed for the young, especially of the female sex—they were entitled to their turn. As for Beauty's husband, that grey-haired and rosy cherub wouldn't ever be in the way of anybody; for who can object to being loved, especially in a quiet and non-invasive way? Parsifal Dingle had healed little Frances of a mild cold; at least, he had treated her by his method of prayer and meditation, and the trouble had disappeared. He didn't make any claims, but left it for you to draw your own conclusions. He was just the person to have around the house at Yuletide, a sort of Santa without whiskers. At this season everybody practised what Parsifal preached—and if only they had been willing to live the rest of the year in the same spirit, what a different world it might have been!

The young people, home from school, were coming and going from one house to the next ; they came in with eyes shining and cheeks glowing from the cold ; they drank hot punch, laughed and chattered and danced, and then raced off to some other place. Alf followed " Marcy," as they called her—impossible to say more than two syllables when you were so busy enjoying life. Theirs was a different kind of love from that which Mr. Dingle taught, and apparently it didn't make you so happy. The young couple got into one of their fusses, and it was off again and on again ; Christmas Day they weren't speaking, and Marcy was telling her mother about it in tears. Lanny thought it was too bad, but they didn't ask him for help. Beauty said it was part of the process of getting adjusted, but Lanny thought she was too optimistic. " I never had any such troubles with Rosemary," he said ; to which his mother answered : " Yes, but you lost out with her ! "

II

In one of the attic rooms of this large house lived a stoutish elderly woman whom you would have taken for a retired nurse or housekeeper ; she was known to all as " Madame," and spoke English with a Polish accent. Nobody could have been more unobtrusive ; she seemed perfectly content to sit in her room and play various games of solitaire, and when Irma's maid, her friend, came to see her, she would tell how the latest batch of games had eventuated. Never would you have guessed that this dull-seeming, slow-moving old person was the repository of one of the oldest and most bewildering gifts with which a prankish Nature or Providence had seen fit to endow humankind.

Some member of the Budd family or their privileged friends would send up to her room and ask if she felt in the mood for a sitting ; almost always she would say Yes, and would repair to that person's room, and sit in an easy chair, lay her head back and close her eyes—and then what fantastic events would begin to happen ! You would hear the deep bass voice of an Amerindian chieftain, dead a couple of hundred years according to his own account and speaking with a Polish accent ! But don't laugh—for before you had got your mouth open he might be telling you something about your great-uncle, whose very name you would have to look up in the family records ; or something about yourself that you had thought was a secret from the whole world.

Lanny Budd, free-spoken and too humorous, had managed to get himself " in Dutch " with " Tecumseh " by asking persistent

questions of a sceptical nature ; so it was rarely that the old creature—whoever or whatever he was—could be persuaded to serve him. “ Oh, so you’re back again, Mr. Smarty ! ” the booming voice would say ; which certainly didn’t sound Iroquois or Polish. It was unfortunate, because Lanny was one who really wanted to understand these mysteries, and had stood for a lot of ridicule on Tecumseh’s behalf. People wouldn’t make subtle distinctions in matters occult ; either you knew it was all tommy-rot or else you were a victim of it.

But Lanny kept on trying, because he had witnessed events which were beyond explanation by what the world was pleased at the moment to consider “ normal.” By and by the world might change its mind and decide to include a lot of new things as normal ; but they weren’t going to do it at the behest of a playboy, a darling of fortune whom they knew as Mr. Irma Barnes. Lanny held a great respect for science, and it was his hope that some day a really learned man would come along and experiment with Madame Zyszynski and find out how she did these things. He had found scientists who admitted that it was quite remarkable, but that didn’t keep them from going back to their everyday routine, disregarding the possibility that there might be unknown universes all around us, or in us, or through us, trying in vain to let us know about themselves.

III

At this time Lanny was persisting, because it seemed to him that if there was a world of spirits, Freddi Robin, newly arrived among them, would certainly be seeking to communicate with his former friends. But Tecumseh had become annoyed by the very idea of “ that Jewish fellow ” and would have nothing to do with him. A slow, tedious, and for the most part thankless task, probing these dark regions of the subconscious mind ! Each of us has his own, and apparently something of other people’s ; an ocean of mindstuff in which few soundings have been taken and which is full of creatures stranger than any Loch Ness monster. Put your net down in it, and you may bring up a burden of seaweed and a wriggling mess of jellyfish ; you may try time after time with no better luck. But then, just as you are about to quit in boredom, up comes something that shines with an unearthly light—or maybe some writing derived from a lost Atlantis !

“ Tecumseh,” pleaded Lanny, with abject humility, “ do be kind to me. I know that my Jewish friend is in the spirit world now, and he would surely talk to me if you would find him.”

What was it that brought results after so many failures? The power of some spirit? Or some new train of thought in Lanny's own subconscious mind? Impossible to say; but on the day after Christmas, sitting with Madame in his own study, the investigator got something that jolted him like a mule's kick. "There is no Jew here, but there is a young man who says he is a friend. He is tall and has a sort of yellow hair, rather wavy. He is drawing a picture of you and it is good. He says you will know him that way."

"Does he give any name?"

"He says something that sounds like Lood. Do you know him? Lood-veek?"

"I know him well," said Lanny promptly. "I am delighted he has come."

"He hears you say that and is happy. He rubs out the mouth in the drawing and makes it smiling."

Here was another of those strange, confused, and confusing manifestations! Gertrud Schultz had identified herself to Lanny by means of a drawing, and now her husband was doing the same! Was that because they were two artists with but a single thought? Or was it because Lanny had got the idea fixed in his mind, and now the subconscious mind of Madame was incorporating it into the fantasy-creation which was called Tecumseh? Very certainly Lanny hadn't mentioned Trudi and her drawing to anybody in this world.

"Tell him I am most anxious to hear whatever he cares to tell me," said Lanny; and added ingratiatingly: "Also, I am deeply grateful to you, Tecumseh."

"You will really appreciate me some day. This man writes on the drawing-board that to you he is Ludi. Is that right?"

"Quite right. Ask him how he is."

"He says he has escaped from terrible suffering. He says he never believed in the spiritual life. He used to laugh at you and at me, but he will surely never do it again."

"I beg him to come often and tell me about himself. There are reasons why I wish especially to know."

"He says: 'How is my wife?'"

"She is well."

"He asks: 'Have you seen her?'"

Something like a lightning flash took place in the mind of Lanny Budd. One cannot lead a double life and not have suspicions of even the most innocent-seeming events. Could it be that the Gestapo was reaching into the spirit realm? Could it be that some agent had managed to make friends with Madame and was using

her, with or without her own knowledge? Either idea seemed fantastic, but Lanny couldn't keep them from his mind—and it was exactly as if he said the words aloud. "You do not trust me!" exclaimed the deep bass voice. "How can I ever help you?"

"I do trust you, Tecumseh!" exclaimed the secret agent. "Don't you know the story of the man who prayed: 'Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief'? Help me now by giving my messages to Ludi. Tell him that I have seen his wife and she thinks only of him."

"I would like to communicate with her, Lanny." It was Ludi himself, speaking directly, something which happened only when a séance went especially well. He used precise English, as he had done in the old days when Lanny had visited the Berlin apartment of the Schultzes to inspect Trudi's art work.

"It would be hard to arrange, Ludi; you know the circumstances. Some day, perhaps, but not now—unless you can reach her where she is."

"I have tried, but I cannot; there is no channel."

"I hope to see her again some day, and I will deliver your messages. Give me some password, something that will convince her it is really you."

"She has a strawberry mark just over her right knee."

A curious "psychic phenomenon" indeed! Lanny was always trying to persuade himself that these revelations were a product of telepathy, or mind-reading, or whatever name you chose to give it. He hadn't told anybody about Monck or what this man had said about Trudi's birthmark; it seemed to him obvious that at this moment the mind of Madame was taking things out of Lanny's mind and weaving them into her story. Fascinating to watch, and to a psychologist perhaps as hard to believe as the existence of spirits; but surely it wouldn't help to convince Trudi that her husband was actually sending her a message!

IV

The investigator thought as hard as he could. He had to step warily, knowing that the querulous chieftain might decide to break off the conversation at any instant. "Ludi," he explained, "you must realize that your wife goes swimming in summer, and many people see that mark. Can't you manage to think of something which only she would know?"

"All right," replied the strange voice—composite of an old

Polish woman, an Iroquois Indian, and a Berlin commercial artist and Social-Democratic party member. "Tell her: 'Chin-Chin.'"

"Will she know what that means?"

"She will know."

Suddenly there came from the throat of the old woman a burst of sound, the barking of a little dog; it was so realistic that Lanny could have imagined the creature within a few inches of his ankles, leaping at him in a fury and compelling him to kick it away. This went on for fully a minute, and was followed by silence.

"Was that Chin-Chin?" inquired the investigator.

"That was me," said the spirit voice. Ludi wasn't required to be perfect in his grammar—and anyhow, there are grammarians who defend that form. "Trudi will tell you about it," he added. "People do silly things when they are young, and happy, and very much in love."

"Of course," said Lanny, who had been all three. "She will want to know how you came to pass over, Ludi." The phrase is considered good form among spiritualists.

"It would be better not to go into that. I was in Oranienburg. I couldn't stand it any more, so in the night I chewed my wrists until I tore the arteries."

"Tell me where you are now, Ludi. You know that will mean a lot to her."

"She will come here some day and then she will know."

"I want to try to convince her," persisted the American. "You can help me by explaining matters. Do you have a body where you are?"

"What would I do with the body I left in Oranienburg and that the Nazis burned in a furnace?"

"You know all the things you knew on earth. Do you know other things also?"

"Very many. I am my own mind, but I am other minds, too."

"Minds of people on this earth or on your side?" It was an ill-chosen question, which had the effect of breaking up the show. "What's the use of all that?" burst out the voice of the old-time warrior. "You aren't going to believe what he tells you; you're just figuring over the old stuff."

"Oh, please, Tecumseh!" pleaded Lanny. "I'm trying so hard to help my friend and his unhappy wife."

"He is a good fellow," announced the chieftain. "For his sake I will tolerate you; but you are no good at all, you just tie yourself up in long words, and you wouldn't believe it if I should smack you one in the eye."

"Try it some day," said the playboy spunkily. "It might be good for me."

"You sit with Madame in the dark some night, and I'll show you what I can do. Only you'll say it's a teleplasm! Go on about your business now."

And that was the end. Lanny knew it would be useless to plead. A long silence; and then Madame began to sigh. When she came out of her trance she inquired, as always: "Did you get good results?"

"Very good, indeed." Lanny was happy to say it, because it pleased her. She never asked what you had heard; she had the idea that this was bad form, since people often got embarrassing secrets about themselves or others. Instead she lay back and closed her eyes, resting. Finally she remarked: "I won three games of Patience this afternoon."

"You cheated yourself," he replied. It was his customary jest, at which she never failed to titter. She had adopted him in her heart as an imaginary son, replacing one whom she had borne and lost; every moment that he would spare out of his fashionable life to chat with her was one she would cherish and dream over.

Robbie Budd was back in Newcastle, but there weren't any Christmas holidays for him; he was working harder than ever in his life before, bent upon showing his world that he was not merely a great salesman and promoter, but also an executive, in every way the equal of his father, who had failed to appreciate him all his life and had died without atoning for the error. Robbie had collected large sums of money and was going to spend them with a speed and efficiency which would astonish the town of his birth. He was going to build a fabricating plant which would be his own to run, whose products would be his own to market, with no father and no elder brother to hinder or check him. Robbie had made his blunders of over-optimism, but he had learned from them and would not repeat them; there would be no more speculation in Wall Street, only production in Newcastle, and of an article which was in the position of the motor-car thirty years ago. Once more there was a chance to reap fortunes; and in spite of the Bible statement, the race would be to the swift and the battle to the strong.

In Robbie's forward-leaping land it was no uncommon thing for a man to raise several million dollars for a new enterprise and then

be in a hurry to get it started. There were men who knew how to design industrial plants, and Robbie was now closeted with them day and night. There were men who knew how to dredge tidelands and make docks and a model harbour; others who knew how to grade land, and had tools which would do it with magical speed. Robbie was now making contracts with these, and with others who would come and pour concrete foundations the moment the frost was out of the ground. Before summer a forest of steel girders would arise where formerly had been marshes and cow pastures. All this was commonplace in the "land of unlimited possibilities."

Robbie threw up his job with Budd Gunmakers, and Johannes Robin, coming home from South America, set to work to help with contracts and purchasing. The firm of "R and R," which had been Lanny's joke in youth, was now a firmly based reality. Hansi and Bess being married, Lanny having risked his life to save Johannes and Freddi, Robbie having helped Johannes to get on his feet again—all these were ties stronger than any law could have devised. A one-time Jewish money magnate would give his friend the benefit of the skill he had acquired in more than forty years of trading, and would never worry about what he was going to get in return. He could be sure it would be generous and, what was more important, it would be out of reach of the Nazis!

Mama and Rahel packed their few belongings and departed from Bienvenu, writing letters full of thanks to Mrs. Dingle and Lanny and Irma for their kindness. Irma said nothing to her husband, but he knew what a relief she found this; for how could anybody enjoy the pleasures of social life in the atmosphere of grief and fear which those poor Jewish people inevitably spread around them? Irma was glad also on account of her little girl, because she didn't want those two children to become too fond of each other; she had no mind to find herself some day in the position of Robbie Budd and his wife, with a Jewish son-in-law and the possibility of a half-Jewish grandchild. All right to have Jewish friends, but mixing your blood was something different.

VI

Right after the holidays the Lanny Budds—or the Irma Barneses, as their friends often said it—were planning to return to the Riviera for the winter. Lanny in the meantime had managed to find purchasers for two of Göring's paintings, and it was a question of how to handle these deals. To Irma it appeared simple to send the

money and let the fat General ship the paintings directly to the purchasers ; but Lanny said : " How could I ever know what they got ? "

" You mean you think he'd send them the wrong pictures ? " There was a note of indignation in Irma's voice, as if the governing classes of the whole world were being insulted.

Lanny explained patiently that there was a great deal of rascality in the art world—he didn't say in the Nazi world. " Paintings are imitated so cleverly that only an expert can tell the difference. Somebody might do it without even Göring's knowing it. My duty is not done unless I personally see the painting shipped. Otherwise, if the customer complains, I have no defence, but have to refund his money and take the loss."

" That's going to be a nuisance, your having to go to Berlin all the time, Lanny."

" I'll let these customers wait till the weather gets warmer," he answered, with a smile. He would have liked to tell Trudi about the séance, but he wanted still more to be fair to his wife and not deceive her any more than necessary.

However the day before they were leaving England a letter came, having all those signs which he recognized—the German stamp, the writing, and the cheap envelope. He put it into his pocket with some other mail until he was alone. Then he read :

DEAR MR. BUDD,—If you should see your friend Schmidt, the art dealer, please tell him that I have some sketches which I should like to show him. They are not the same as the last, but better, I hope, and have to do with interesting personalities. This is important to me. Thanking you for past favours,—
MUELLER.

That was all ; but it was enough to cause Lanny to reconsider his plans. " Irma, I've been thinking about it and I believe I ought to run over to Berlin and get those paintings before I settle down for the winter."

" Oh, how provoking ! " she exclaimed. " Why do you want to make yourself a slave like that ? "

" It'll only take a couple of days, and you don't have to come. Wait for me in Paris if you prefer."

Paris was always an agreeable place for waiting. You could do shopping, if you had what it took, and there were plays to be seen and fashionable friends to go about with. This young couple had two cars which they were taking to the Riviera, so they arranged

that the chauffeur should drive Frances and her governess and maid direct to Bienvenu ; Irma found travelling with children a nuisance and always avoided it if she could. Lanny would drive his wife to Paris and then proceed alone to Berlin.

There was but one dubious aspect of this project. " Lanny, can I really trust you in Germany ? "

" Darling," he smiled, " how could I be under better auspices than the head of the Prussian state ? "

" You know what I mean ! You'll be getting mixed up with those friends of Freddi and Hansi again."

He had thought carefully what he would say, and had learned a number of formulas. " My dear, I have important business to transact and I'm not going to let anything interfere with it. If I do this job, the old pirate may give me others. Don't forget that Germany is a treasure-house of great art, and America can use a lot of it."

" Lanny, I tell you I couldn't stand anything like you put me through before. I've got to make that plain to you. I can't stand it and I won't ! "

He knew that he had to grant her the right to say it all over again ; it is a part of the duty of husbands to hear about their past sins. It is the part of wisdom never to argue, or question any statement, however inexact it may seem ; merely utter soothing words, and the fewer the better—Mother Nature having apparently planned women to talk and men to listen. " Yes, dear," he repeated. " I'll take the best of care of myself, and not stay a moment longer than necessary."

VII

Irma wanted him to take a train ; but he liked to drive, even in January. He paid no attention to the weather—unless it was a blinding snowstorm, he went right through. He would need only one day in Berlin, and he wanted to bring the paintings with him, and have them packed and shipped from France—trusting no one in Naziland. If anything delayed him, he would telephone without fail ; meanwhile Irma would be gossiping with the Duchesse de Ceci and the Comtesse de Cela, and on the way to Bienvenu she would entertain him with all the latest scandals of the *haut monde de Paris*.

He motored without incident, and saw once more the factory chimneys of Germany, pouring forth smoke day and night ; also the patient people, performing whatever hard tasks were assigned

them, and winning the sympathy of an American who rarely had to do anything except what his fancy dictated. He arrived late, spent the night at the Adlon, and in the morning telephoned the Oberleutnant, a sort of glorified secretary in military uniform, who met him by appointment at the palace. Up to twenty months ago this marble edifice had belonged to a Jewish *Schieber*, and in it Lanny and his wife had eaten and drunk delight. Now it was the home of the fat General's lady favourite, a darling of the German stage and screen; Lanny's taste was all over it, and he hoped the statuesque blonde beauty appreciated what he had done for her.

The two paintings, *Head of St. John*, a fragment of a larger picture by Tiepolo, and *Parliament Buildings on the Thames* by Monet—curious contrast of old and new—had been taken from the walls and set aside for him. He examined them and made sure they were what he wanted; then he put a bank draft into the Oberleutnant's hands and took the bills of sale which had been signed by the Minister-Präsident's personal disbursing officer. Lanny wrapped the precious works in two oil-cloths he carried for the purpose, and two uniformed lackeys bore them to his car. "You can show these documents at the border," said the staff officer, "and if there is any question about it, tell them to phone me." Lanny thanked him, asked after his family, answered questions about his own; they smiled, bowed, shook hands, and parted the best of friends.

VIII

Lanny was returning to Paris, but he chose a devious route, not prescribed in any motorist's guide-book. He turned a number of unexpected corners, and ended up in the Moabit district exactly at noon. As he passed a certain corner, there was a young woman in a worn brown coat, with a bundle of sketches in the crook of her left arm. He passed her and stopped as before; she stepped in without a word, and away they went—but not towards Paris.

Lanny watched in his little mirror, while Trudi sank low in her seat to make herself inconspicuous, and turned her face towards him so that it could not be seen by persons passing. "Lanny," she exclaimed, "it is so kind of you to take this trouble!"

"My expenses are being paid," he replied amiably. "I have two paintings in the back seat, for which I have just paid your Air-Kommandant the sum of forty thousand marks. It means that I have four thousand for you, if you can use them."

"I have used most of what you gave me, and to good purpose."

"O.K. Is that why you wrote me?"

"No—something even more important. Are you sure we're not being followed?"

"I'll take another turn," he replied. The car roamed here and there about this old working-class district of the *Hauptstadt*. "All clear!" he said, in American. "Shoot!"

"I have some documents of a most confidential nature which I thought you might be able to put to use. They are photostatic copies of reports to Göring's office, showing production of military plants in violation of the Versailles treaty. You perhaps do not know that we are manufacturing certain types of transport planes in Germany, while in Sweden the same types are being made for our government, but having armament; they bear the same type numbers, but the armoured ones have the initial K, that is, *Krieg*. With these documents you can prove that Göring is getting more warplanes than France and Britain combined."

"Holy smoke!" said the art expert. "How do you get such things?"

"That is one question you are not permitted to ask. Suffice it to say that all our friends are not yet dead, or even in concentration camps. Old-time party members come to us; some of them have turned Nazi as a camouflage."

"That is a pretty risky business, Trudi."

"They risk their lives, and so do we. Whether you care to help us is for you to decide."

"What do you want me to do with the documents?"

"It is a field altogether strange to me. I should think the information would be of interest to the military authorities of France and England."

"Anyone would suppose it; and if I tell you that they might do nothing about it, you would be shocked. But I know some of them, and they believe what they want to believe and nothing more?"

"Even if you put the documents into their hands?"

"They would want to know how I got them, and if I didn't tell them, I'm afraid they'd begin to suggest they mightn't be genuine. All intelligence departments forge documents for their own purposes, and naturally they are sure that others are doing the same. They can't trust any anti-Nazis, because they have the same sort of people in their own country and fear them even more than they do Hitler and Göring."

"I haven't told you everything yet," said Trudi. "I have photostatic copies of Wehrmacht intelligence reports, sent in by agents in Paris and London, giving data as to the situation of military

objectives such as oil-depots, gas-tanks, arsenals, and other bombing-targets."

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed the American.

"They are evidently the results of surveyors' work; that is, they tell you, so many metres north-north-west of some prominent object—things like that."

"Are they in code?"

"They consist entirely of names of places, distances, and directions. They are abbreviated, and for place names they give only initials. The person who brought them to us has supplied interpretations which make it all quite clear. One hundred and forty-seven metres due north of such and such a station of the Paris Métro there is an oil-storage depot; so and so many feet south-east of the south entrance to Waterloo Bridge there is a warehouse full of explosives—things like that. Don't you suppose that might be of importance to the English authorities?"

"I've no doubt they'd read them with great interest," replied Lanny, "and doubtless would check them carefully. But would they do anything that made any real difference? You should hear my father talk about the British brass-hats, their dumbness, and their utter, impenetrable complacency. It is beneath their dignity to worry or even to take precautions about anything. They are as solid and as self-satisfied as their own Rock of Gibraltar."

IX

Lanny took his friend for a long drive, discussing every angle of this complicated problem. His final decision was that the documents ought to be published in some paper. The brass-hats wouldn't fail to read them, and the public clamour would stir them up, if anything could.

Trudi had but one objection. "It might be pretty hard on the person who got them for us."

"Does he imagine that you can turn these documents over to the British or the French military authorities and not have Göring get wind of it in a few days? Just as you have spies in his office, so he has equally efficient ones in every army and navy headquarters in the world."

"I suppose so," admitted the woman. "We may have to get our friend out of the country."

"Let me suggest something I thought of while I was figuring out ways to help Freddi. Devise a scheme to cast the suspicion on

some good Nazi official. That is a way to confuse them and break them up. " When she did not answer, he added : " Tell me this : have you the right to let the documents be published ? "

" I was told to make whatever use of them seemed best. "

" Very well ; I'll take them on that basis. "

" Do you think you can get them out safely ? "

" It happens that I am in a position to do so. There's no use going into details. "

" You must be careful, in disposing of them, that there's no trail leading to you ; for surely the Gestapo will get busy with all their resources, and if they trace it to you, you'll not be able to come back here again. "

" I understand, and I think I know a way. " She had told him not to ask questions, and now he showed that he had learned the lesson. " I wasn't bargaining for anything like this, but I see it's important, and you may count on me to do my best. If I fail, it won't be from lack of careful thought. "

That subject settled, he told her about a stout old woman, widow of a butler in the home of a Warsaw merchant. Trudi had heard all about Lanny's interest in spiritualistic matters ; it had been part of the gossip concerning the rich American couple, and had cost him a good part of the respect which the comrades might otherwise have felt for him.

" I have never given any thought to such matters, Lanny, " she said, taking no chance of offending him.

" I know, but you're going to give some now. Last week I had a séance, hoping to get Freddi, and instead I got a voice that said he was Ludi. "

" *Ach, Gott !* " He felt her start. " Did it sound like him ? "

" Not especially ; but it usually doesn't. What I did was to ask for a sort of password ; something that you would be sure to know. "

" And he gave one ? "

" He said to tell you ' Chin-Chin. ' "

She sat up, forgetting about the traffic and the possibility of being seen. " Oh, Lanny, how amazing ! "

" You recognize it, then ? "

" It was a little Skye terrier we had. "

" He barked with great excitement—short, quick barks—you'd almost think he was crazy. "

"Did Ludi say that?"

"He did it. At least there was a lot of barking, and when I asked if it was a dog, he said: 'It was me.'"

The woman sat with her hands pressed together until the knuckles were white. "Lanny, that takes my breath away! Ludi used to play with the dog; he would get down on his hands and knees and bark at him, and the dog would bark back, and you could hardly tell one from the other. It used to terrify me, because the dog became so excited, and I was afraid he might bite Ludi's nose."

"Ludi said: 'People do silly things when they are young, and happy, and very much in love.'"

The woman bowed her head in her hands and began to weep silently. It was too much, hitting her all at once. The fact that Ludi was dead—and the fact that he was alive! But was he? Right away arose those doubts which torment people who begin to consider the possibility of survival; especially when they have built their faith upon the dogma of materialistic interpretation—not merely of history, but of psychology, and of everything else on, under, or above the earth!

The woman began to stammer questions through her tears. Did Lanny really believe it was Ludi? What else had he said? Did he say what had happened to him at the hands of the Storm-troopers? And what was happening to him now? She was ashamed of her tears, because she was certain that it was all nonsense; but even to think about it was more than she could bear. The strangest paradox imaginable: she couldn't believe that Ludi was dead unless she first believed that he was alive, and she couldn't believe that he was alive unless she first believed that he was dead! And which did she want him—dead in this world and alive in a future, or alive in this world and certain to be dead before long? Also, which was more precious to her, love for her husband or love for her Marxist doctrines?

Lanny couldn't solve those problems for her. He could only tell her everything that had happened, every word that had been spoken. They were out in the snowbound country by that time, and he drew up by the roadside and consulted his note-book to verify details. Then she wanted to know about Madame from the beginning, and those strange phenomena the very thought of which had bored her two or three years ago. Zaharoff and his duquesa, Lady Caillard and her husband—"Vinnie, Birdie, and a Kiss!"—and then about Johannes's Uncle Nahum, and all the other shadow figures who had haunted the personality of Madame, like so many

bats in the twilight, fluttering past a light and then out into darkness again.

"Lanny, I must meet that woman!"

"We have brought her to Berlin more than once, and it may be possible to do it again. Meanwhile, here is something you might do." He told her how he and his wife had each of them visited a different medium in Berlin at the same time, and had got what was called a "cross-correspondence"; that is, two parts of a message which fitted together, in this case a verse from the Bible. One of these women was fashionable and high-priced, but the other was poor and obscure. Lanny consulted his note-book and wrote down her name and address for Trudi.

"Don't say an unnecessary word," he advised. "Give a false name if she asks. Pay her five marks or whatever she charges, and sit still and listen to what she says."

Immediately the Marxist conscience of Trudi Schultz began to trouble her. "Lanny, it seems wicked to spend money for such things when the cause needs it so badly!"

"I'm interested in this subject," replied the young plutocrat, with a grin. "I make it obligatory—like the litre of milk every day! By the way, I see you have been getting that, for it shows in your face."

XI

Lanny gave his friend the money he had brought, and then deposited her in the vicinity of a station of the Underground from which she could get to her home. Then he set out towards the west, and when he was out in the country he stopped and unwrapped the documents which Trudi had left with him, freight more dangerous than so many cans of nitro-glycerin. With tools in his car he took off the cover from the back of a picture frame, spread the documents flat against the back of the canvas, and tacked the cover into place again. It wasn't a perfect job, but he counted on the priceless bill of sale with the letterhead of the Minister-Präsident of Prussia and the official stamps and seals, so overwhelmingly impressive to every German functionary.

He wasn't going to Paris, but to Amsterdam, an orderly and well-conducted capital a safe distance out of Naziland. As he drove he tried to imagine all possible mishaps which could occur at the border, and to rehearse what he would do and say in connection with them. By no means the best thought-companions on a cold January day with flurries of snow in the air making careful driving imperative. He made up his mind to take the most haughty of

attitudes; to stand on the prerogative of his expensive car, his impeccable clothing, and above all his almost divine document. Under no circumstance would he permit anyone to lay profane hands upon the precious paintings; he would produce a veritable tornado of *Donnerwetter* and threaten instant loss of office to the underling who dared to defy his commands. He would compel that person to telephone immediately to the Minister-Präsident's staff officer; or, if this was refused, Lanny would insist that they wait until he had had opportunity to do so himself.

But all this worrying proved entirely unnecessary; such mishaps simply do not take place under *deutsche Zucht und Ordnung*. The fine car drew up in front of the painted pole which barred the highway, and the driver descended to meet the officials who came forth from the station. It was dark, and snow was falling; there were dim shadows while he stood in the rays of a flashlight. He swung up a stiff right arm and declaimed: "*Heil Hitler!*" They answered—it was obligatory, also automatic. He dropped his arm again, and in his best German announced: "I am an art expert"—fortunately the Germans have a full-sized and impressive word, *Kunst Sachverständiger*, literally, "art-object-understander." He went on: "I have travelled to Berlin at the request of Minister-Präsident General Göring and purchased from him two art works which I have in this car. I am instructed by Oberleutnant Furtwaengler of the Minister-Präsident's personal staff to present to you this bill of sale for the works as evidence that the matter is according to command—" *befehlsmässig*, another impressive word. "Here also are my passport and my exit permit, which has been signed by the Minister-Präsident's office."

"*Sehr wohl, mein Herr.*" They fell over themselves. Nothing so momentous had come their way in many a week. "*Will der Herr nicht hinein kommen?*"

"I'll wait and stretch my legs," said Lanny. "*Heil Hitler!*"

"*Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler!*" They didn't even ask if he was taking out money or anything else that was *verboten*. They hurried inside, and never were documents inspected and stamped so promptly. Others came out to have a glimpse of the wonderful car and the wonderful Herr who only a few hours previously had been in the actual presence of the Godhead; not El Shaddai, the Terrible One, but the Teutonic Odin, God of the Furious Host. The documents were returned with bows, and Lanny took them and put them with slow dignity into an inside pocket; he stepped into his car, the barrier was raised, and he rolled into the Koninkrijk der Nederlanden.

XII

In a comfortable room in the Hotel Amstel Lanny put in a midnight call for Eric Vivian Pomeroy-Nielson at The Reaches. He felt safe now—if the Gestapo hadn't been interested to follow him in Berlin, they would hardly be doing it here. "Excuse me if I woke you up," he said. "I'm in Amsterdam on picture business, and Irma is waiting in Paris. There's something I need your advice about. Can't you and Nina take the Harwich ferry to-morrow evening? I'll meet you at the Hook in the morning and drive you to Paris and we'll have a lark."

"Well, I'll be damned!" said the baronet's son.

"I can't explain it, but it's important, and you'll understand when I see you. Don't say anything to Nina about it, just call it a holiday and let me pay the bills—it'll be worth it many times over to me. If she can't come, you get somebody to motor you to Harwich and let me pay for that."

"You must have sold some big pictures, old top! It's a date!"

Lanny called his wife and told her of this arrangement. She said: "Oh, goody!" and felt no surprise because people jumped here and there in search of pleasure. She herself had just got back from a theatre party with Denis de Bruyne. Lanny said: "Furtwaengler sent his love—I believe you have made a conquest." He laughed, because he could imagine the *moue* she would be making. She regarded the Nazi staff officer as what the Germans call an *Emporkömmling*, a "little upcomer."

Lanny had the two paintings brought to his room with him and now he took off the back of one and spent a good part of the night studying the photographs—twenty-four sheets, carefully selected. He thought: "If this doesn't wake up the British and French, they'll deserve what is coming to them." He thought of the model aeroplane factory his father was planning, and had an impulse to go and help. But no, what he was doing was better. Set up a big alarm bell and start it ringing!

He slept with the documents half under him, and in the morning he borrowed a needle and thread from the chambermaid—having a hard time persuading her not to do the work for him! He sewed the documents in several parts of his coat-lining, and then, feeling like a padded Chinese, he had his paintings carried down into the hotel basement and separately boxed by the porter. He took them to

the express office and shipped them, duly covered by insurance ; after which he went for a walk in this fine old city of frozen canals and snow-covered trees.

In the Ryks Museum the kindly authorities had provided comfortable plush-covered benches upon which an art expert could sit for hours and study the fine points of several of the world's great masterpieces. During his lifetime the creator of these works had been treated none too well ; he had died bankrupt and miserable, but now he was honoured, and his finest works were placed in separate rooms with ample space and perfect lighting. Amid reverent silence Lanny could lose himself in a time three hundred years gone, imagining himself in conversation with the five "Syndics," members of the Clothmakers' Company. This association had made good cloth and from it their tailors had made good clothing ; the five gentlemen had put on their best, and their wives had seen to it that all the accessories were right, while an eccentric genius named Rembrandt van Rijn was immortalizing their features and figures. They looked out at Lanny with such life that he was prepared to have them speak, and was sure it would be a worthwhile conversation ; for they were obviously cultivated gentlemen, who knew how to make use of their wealth and whose ideas were by no means limited to the quality and prices of cloth.

In an adjoining and much larger room the visitor renewed his acquaintance with a great canvas, covering an entire wall. *The Sortie*, sometimes known as *The Night-Watch* although it appears that the sun is streaming on to some of the accoutrements and coloured raiment of the watchmen. It is the painting which ruined poor Rembrandt, because the gentlemen who had ordered it wanted a portrait gallery, with each of their faces given equal prominence, whereas the bold painter had presumed to compose a scene. They were marching out to repel invaders ; and Lanny had a hard time keeping his attention on the fine points of the art of applying paint to canvas, because he was thinking about the position of a small and civilized country lying alongside a powerful one which was rapidly sliding back into barbarism. He wanted to cry out to all the polite and friendly Dutch people whom he saw in this museum : "Keep your night-watch, and your day-watch, too, because the Nazis are making surveyors' maps of all your bombing objectives ! Do not give too much thought to splendid uniforms or other such details, because you may have to dig down into your everlasting mud to hide from bombs and grenades and flame-throwers and poison gas ! "

XIII

Nina and Rick arrived, and Lanny bundled them up and drove them to Paris in time for lunch. Afterwards the two ladies discussed their affairs in Irma's room, while Lanny took his chum into his own and told him what it was that made his coat fit badly. After Rick had got over his amazement he said: "It's ghastly, Lanny, but I doubt if we British will really do anything about it, because our governing class can't make up their minds whether Hitler is good or bad—in other words, whether he intends to march east or west."

"Good God!" exclaimed the American. "If he's going east what does he want with surveys of London and Paris?"

"Oh, well, they're all getting such data—that is, unless they're too lazy, as I rather think we are just now."

Rick agreed that the only hope was to use the documents to stir up the public. An active journalist didn't have to be told what an explosion they would make, and he offered to take them straight to a liberal editor whom he knew and who would give them ample space and advertising. But Lanny said: "You've contributed to that paper, so you will be one of the first persons the Nazis will set out to trail. They will find out that you came to Amsterdam right after I left Germany; and they may even find us registered at this hotel."

"Whoo-ee!" said the Englishman.

"I've given a lot of thought to the job, and it's far from easy. You can't imagine what efforts Göring will make to trace this thing down; he'll stand the whole Gestapo on its head. If anything turns attention to me, they'll watch me the next time I come into Germany, and get every person who meets me."

"Right you are, son."

"These documents have to be published by some paper with which neither of us has ever had anything to do; a paper without any left tendencies, so that Göring will decide that the job was done by respectable government spies."

"That will need some thinking," declared Rick. "One paper has gone over to the pro-Hitler clique and the other paper is practically a Fascist organ." He went on to canvass the other papers, and finally chose one which he said was completely reactionary, interested in rearmament from the point of view of British Empire security. "Too bad to promote its circulation, but that can't be helped. Hitler's going to make strange bedfellows in all the nations around him!"

Said Lanny: "The documents ought to be taken to the paper, not by you but by somebody who is pledged never to mention where he got hold of them."

That also called for thinking. They discussed public men whom they knew, whether personally or by reputation, to find one who was honest, at least to the extent of being for England more than for himself. In the end Rick's choice fell upon a member of Parliament whom "the pater" knew slightly; one of those Englishmen who manage to combine Church of England piety with capitalist-class politics and the construction of bigger and better dreadnaughts. Rick would seek a private interview with this statesman, vouch for the genuineness of the documents, and pledge him to deliver them to the newspaper publisher without any hint as to how they had reached England.

"By the way," said Lanny, "I'm not saying anything to Irma about all this, and it might be just as well not to tell Nina."

"More than that," countered his friend, looking him in the eyes. "Neither of us is going to say one word about this—ever. Shake hands on it and mean it!"

8

The Dusky Clouds Ascending

THERE were three comfortable dwellings on the Bienvenu estate, the Villa, the Lodge, and the Cottage—the first being the home of the Dingles, the second of Lanny and Irma, and the third of Nina and Rick or other friends when they were free to come. Also there were two small structures known as studios, one having been built for Marcel and one for Kurt in the old days. Marcel's studio was now occupied by Lanny, his books, piano, and music, while the other was for Hansi and Bess when they came, and otherwise for any noisemaker or other eccentric person whom it was thought wise to segregate. Lanny was always coming upon someone who claimed to have genius, and Irma had been told that it was a distinguished thing to have such persons on the place—only she begged that they wouldn't be Reds or Pinks, because they brought

such undesirable company. Since Lanny was trying to avoid displeasing not merely his wife but also a fat Nazi general and his secret police, he made a practice of meeting his off-colour friends at some obscure lunching-place in the city of Cannes.

Bienvenu was an extremely humble affair according to Barnes family standards, but Irma put up with it for the sake of love and the climate. The main trouble was, there was no room for entertaining on what she considered an adequate scale, and outdoor affairs were subject to the whims of the weather. The problem was solved by a combination with Emily Chattersworth, who had two fine drawing-rooms at Sept Chênes, her Riviera home, big enough for dancing. Emily was no longer equal to the task of entertaining, yet she couldn't bear to give up her friends or to neglect to make use of a celebrity when one came along. So Irma would come up and act as hostess, with the older woman to advise her. After some argument Irma had gained the right to pay for the "talent," also for the food and drink. Emily's staff of well-trained servants would do the work, and the utility king's daughter would watch and learn every detail of the subtle duties of a *salonnière*. That was the career she had chosen, and the experience would be equally useful whether she decided to apply it in Paris, London, or New York.

So a season passed pleasantly enough. Visitors came back to the Riviera, and costumes and jewels and titles were flaunted. Prosperity appeared to be reviving after a long financial drought. Franklin D. Roosevelt had been President of the United States for two years, and while the Supreme Court had thrown out some of his schemes, the general idea of free spending was coming to be accepted, even by those who scolded at it. The device enabled people to live, and after the fright they had had, that was enough. The masses got money from the government and spent it in grocery and clothing stores, and these in turn bought from the wholesalers, and these from the manufacturers; so it went, all the way down the line, and bonds which Irma owned began to draw interest and stocks to earn dividends. Each quarter her income was a bit larger, and all this reinforced her own firm conviction that money was made to be spent.

People gathered around, eager to help her spend it, and she was generous because that was so much the easiest way; she didn't want glum or anxious faces anywhere in sight, and would put money in the bank to Beauty's account and to Lanny's, and if she found them trying to economize she would say: "What's the big idea?" Living with or near the daughter of J. Paramount Barnes was like being on board one of those old-fashioned, full-rigged clipper ships

with every sail set—a wet sheet and a flowing sea, a wind that follows fast, and fills the white and rustling sails and bends the gallant mast !

II

The Saarland plebiscite was held in January, and resulted in a nine-to-one vote by the inhabitants in favour of a return to Germany. The district had always been German, and doubtless would have voted that way without the colossal propaganda campaign which the Nazis had put on. But the Nazis liked such campaigns, they were the breath of Nazi being, and they were practice for other campaigns which were scheduled for everywhere along the German borders. They included not merely speeches and music and marching, but also the boycotting of merchants and the terrorizing of opponents by brownshirted rowdies of the Deutsche Front, armed with revolvers, daggers, and hard-rubber truncheons.

As soon as the election results were announced, the Nazis prepared their "long knives," and so most of the French population picked up what belongings they could carry and fled. Many came to the Riviera, because it was warmer and therefore a more pleasant place in which to starve. Many were of leftist tendency, and they hadn't been starving for long before they heard about that extraordinary American family with a son and heir who had a tender heart and who was simply rolling in money, being married to one of the greatest heiresses in the world. So came numbers of begging letters in the Bienvenu mail, and many of them were heart-rending. Visitors came to the gates, and when they were told that the young master was not at home they would go away and put their wits to work on some method of getting hold of him.

There had been a sort of amateur secret service at work on the Budd family, and all the Reds and Pinks knew exactly the situation. The mother was a butterfly and a good deal of a fool, while the wife was reactionary, even Fascist in her sympathies ; these two guarded the place like dragons and told all the servants not to let strangers past the gates. The time to catch Lanny was when he came to town ; then if you pounced on him and told him a hard-luck story, he couldn't say No. Another method of contact was through Raoul Palma, director of the École des Travailleurs du Midi ; so it came about that new persons joined the school and asked for jobs as teachers, with salaries however small. Lanny would give money to his Spanish friend, but always under the condition : " Do me the favour to pretend that you got it somewhere else."

III

There came a letter from Rick, saying: "I have seen the gentleman whom I hope to interest in your pictures, and I think the deal will go through." Then a second note: "The picture deal is O.K., and I believe you will be satisfied." A week or so later the documents were published, in instalments, day after day, and there was a tremendous sensation; the baronet's son wrote about it freely, as he would have done if he had known nothing about the matter in advance. There were interpellations in Parliament, and vague answers to the effect that the government were taking cognizance—the English government were always plural, and also they were dignified, imperturbable, and slow to anger when they wanted to be. There was a new term coming into use for statesmen and officials who avoided getting angry with the Nazis; they were called "appeasers," and the Nazis quickly found out who they were and made the most of their state of mind. Jesse Blackless had pointed out to his nephew the fact that those who were most afraid of displeasing the Nazis appeared to be least afraid of displeasing the Soviets.

Lanny got copies of the London papers, and clipped them and sent them to his father. "This looks to be genuine," he wrote, "and ought to help sell your products when you get them ready." Robbie replied: "Hot stuff, and if I thought it was genuine I'd send Johannes over now! Send me anything more of the sort that you come upon. Also, ask your fat friend about it the next time you see him!"

Ramsay MacDonald, still holding on as Prime Minister, made a speech protesting against German rearmament. Ramsay made speeches about many evils, and assumed that this was equivalent to abolishing them. Hitler made a speech in reply, telling how pacific were the intentions of his government; and all the appeasers said: "There, now, you see how he is being maligned!" Wickthorpe told Rick that Downing Street—the British Foreign Office—had made strong representations to the Wilhelmstrasse, and the Wilhelmstrasse had promptly denounced the documents as fraudulent. His Lordship added that he was inclined to accept this, and Rick was not in position to dissent. Among other things Rick sent to Lanny was a clipping from a Left paper of London which said that, if the truth ever became known about these revelations, it would be found that aircraft manufacturers outside of Germany had had a hand in the preparation of them. Rick put some exclamation points

in the margin of this, and Lanny Budd, son of an embryo aircraft manufacturer, didn't fail to appreciate the humour.

Also, there came one of those plain-looking missives from Berlin. "Mueller" expressed her gratitude for his wise use of her sketches, and promised to make some more. Lanny knew that the circulation of English newspapers was still permitted in Germany, and while those particularly dangerous issues had doubtless been confiscated, the details would be known to both the Nazis and their foes. In the midst of the darkness of intrigue that covered Europe, you cast your bread upon the waters—such small crumbs of truth as you could collect—and wondered if the Preacher had been right and would you ever find them again, and where, and when, and how.

IV

There was a diplomatic chess-game being played, with the continent of Europe as the board; a new immensely complicated kind of chess in which the pieces, instead of being lined up on opposite sides, had each his own colour and played his own game. Each king, queen, knight, castle, even the smallest pawn, had his group of elder statesmen who put their heads together in anxious consultation, and after days and perhaps weeks of arguing they made a move; whereupon the whole aspect of the board was altered, and the statesmen of all the other pieces put their heads together and argued and agonized, until some group made a counter move, and at once the clamour of protest and the buzz of consultation started up afresh in all the other chess-chancelleries.

Britain and France had been playing as partners, but were greedy and suspicious, each of the other, and Britain was willing to let Germany grow stronger in order to keep France from growing too strong. So France turned to Russia, which she hated, trying to work out a deal for common defence against a greater danger. Hitler and Mussolini, two upstarts jealous of each other, were ready to break all the rules of the game in the effort to grab something for themselves. Pierre Laval, fresh from a visit to Moscow, paid one to Rome, in which he cooked up a deal with Mussolini, pledging them both to mutual assistance should Germany take what was called "unilateral action" in the matter of rearming. Meanwhile the British Foreign Secretary was angling for an invitation to Munich in order to negotiate with Hitler the terms on which Britain might grant him permission to rearm. Then, of course, it wouldn't be "unilateral action"!

Such was the state of affairs on the sixteenth of March, when Hitler in one of those sudden moves which Europe was learning to know to its terror, upset the continental chessboard by announcing conscription and universal military service in Germany; also that the army, which the Versailles treaty had limited to a hundred thousand men, was to be increased to more than five hundred thousand. At the same time he issued to the German people one of those flamboyant manifestoes, which to Lanny Budd was like hearing his raucous scolding voice. For the ten-thousandth time "Adi" recited the outrages of the Versailles *Diktat*; for the ten-thousandth time he repeated the tale which he had invented and taught to the German people, that the Allies had promised at Versailles to disarm themselves; for the ten-thousandth time he made that declaration of peaceful and honourable intentions which cost him nothing and was worth several army corps to him and his party:

"In this hour the German government renews before the German people, before the entire world, its assurance of its determination never to proceed beyond the safeguarding of German honour and freedom of the Reich, and especially does it not intend in rearming Germany to create any instrument for warlike attack, but, on the contrary, exclusively for defence and thereby for the maintenance of peace. In so doing, the German Reich government expresses the confident hope that the German people, having again reverted to their own honour, may be privileged in independent equality to make their contribution towards the pacification of the world in free and open co-operation with other nations and their governments."



A great many people thought that Adolf Hitler Schicklgruber was insane, and they wrote and talked that way concerning him. When Lanny's friends asked him about this, he replied that it might be a question of definition. If Adi was a lunatic, he was one of that well-known kind which possesses and displays the utmost cunning. He had learned about the British habit of week-ends, and so he made it a rule to announce his bold moves on a Saturday. No British statesman could possibly take action on that day, and every British statesman would have all day Sunday to pray over it, to contemplate the horrors of war and work himself into a state of conscientiousness. He would threaten and bluster, of course; he had to do that in order to be re-elected, but he wouldn't take any action—so Adi figured.

For a while Lanny Budd was fooled, and thought that the Versailles law—the only law that poor Europe had—was going to be enforced. The French government issued a call for common action, and French troops moved up to the German border. The British liberal and labour papers, those which Lanny read, all clamoured for the ending of this intolerable menace. The statesmen rushed here and there like ants whose nest has been upset; they argued and scolded and issued high-sounding pronouncements. The French appealed to the League of Nations, whose duty it was to enforce the law, and the League summoned its Council to decide upon a course.

Lanny, the optimist, cherished the dream that Nazism was going to be checked at last, and he was disconcerted by the letter which came from his English chum, saying: "What's the use of getting excited about German rearmament when you know that it's been going on for years? And don't make the mistake of expecting any action from the sort of statesmen we have here. The British lion is old and has lost nearly all his teeth."

Lanny couldn't believe it, and waited in a state of tension which threatened to interfere with his health. He composed a long letter to Rick, which caused his friend to protest: "No good convincing me. Convince Ramsay, the world's worst maker of phrases! Convince Simon!"

The big Tory papers were all for "peace," and they were the papers from which nine-tenths of the British people got their ideas. As for the League, it hadn't stopped Japan from taking Manchuria, and wasn't ever going to stop any greedy power from taking whatever it could. The Nazi tiger was coming out of his cage—one small step at a time, and very softly, on padded feet, purring most beautiful phrases about making his contribution towards the pacification of the jungle in free and open co-operation with other predatory beasts.

Lanny couldn't give up his hope. How could a man go on living in a world such as Rick portrayed—a world governed by knaves or fools, or a combination of both? Something ought to be done, and Lanny was getting unhappy with himself about it. Here he was dressing up and helping to entertain his wife's friends; taking her out to parties whose sole distinction was the amount of money which had been squandered upon them; exchanging words of little consequence with persons who were considered *distingués*, not because they were wise or good, but because they had learned to spend their wealth upon highly conventionalized forms of costume and conduct. Lanny would drink tea, and dance, and bridle his tongue when political subjects were brought up. When he could stand no more

of it he would go off to his studio and pound upon the piano—loudly enough to wake the ghosts of Marcel Detaze, who had painted the pictures on the walls of this studio, and of Great-Great-Uncle Eli Budd, who had willed Lanny most of the noble books which lined the rest of the wall-space.

Irma had come to understand that she had drawn an odd card in the marriage lottery. She knew that he had to let off steam, and didn't allow herself to be disturbed by thunderous sounds rolling over the estate. But after an hour or two, when she thought he had had a good "workout," she would appear in the studio door clad in a Chinese silk wrapper with magnificent embroidery, plus a pair of bathing-slippers, and holding by the hand a lovely little daughter who had just celebrated her fifth birthday with a party for all the aristocratic children of Cannes and the Cap d'Antibes. "Come on, Beethoven," she would say—or Chopin or Liszt, as she happened to guess. And of course Lanny couldn't resist such condescension; he would slip into his bathing-suit and they would race down to the blue Mediterranean, the temperature of which was exactly right at this time of the year. So the grandson of Budd's would forget the world's woes and follow the advice offered to Alexander the Great:

Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.

VI

Now and then, in some newspaper or magazine—mostly the lettward and wishful-thinking ones—Lanny would come upon some reference to the underground movement of Nazi Germany and the great success it was having, then something would warm up inside him and he would have a few hours of deep inward peace. He dictated letters and mailed out copies of photographs of paintings which he recommended to his clients, and by April he had found purchasers for three more of Göring's works. He was beginning to worry about not hearing from his fellow-conspirator; but at last came a note like the others: "If you see Herr Schmidt, the art dealer, tell him that I have some more sketches, which I hope he will interest himself in. Mueller."

Lanny had been preparing his wife, telling her of the orders he had got and suggesting a trip to Germany in the spring. Irma, for her part, had been preparing a more elaborate programme. Her mother in the Long Island palace was clamouring about being

neglected and not having seen her adored grand-daughter for nearly a year. Irma had been afraid to take the child to America for fear of kidnappers ; but now these seemed to have been all caught, and Irma wasn't the sort of person to stay worried about anything very long. Said she : " Let's go and spend at least part of the summer, and see how Robbie's getting along with his job."

They would visit Berlin and then sail from Bremen, or from London in case Lanny wanted to see Rick. They would motor, of course ; and just as they were discussing whether to go by way of Paris or Vienna, there came a postcard from Pietro Corsatti, American-born Italian who represented a New York newspaper in Rome. They hadn't heard from him for a long time, but would never forget him because of the part he had played in helping to get them married. Now he wrote on a picture postcard showing an alluringly coloured scene, a blue lake, a little island with a huge vine-covered palace having a red roof, and behind it green mountains capped with snow. " Isola Bella " was its name—Beautiful Isle—and underneath it " Pete " had written : " Another gab-fest. Why not come and listen in ? "

Irma, who rarely read the newspapers, didn't know what this meant ; Lanny explained that at Stresa, on Lago Maggiore in the Italian Alps, the statesmen of Britain, France, and Italy were assembling in the effort to agree upon a programme to tie Hitler down and make him behave. Pete's suggestion struck a spark in an amateur publicist's soul. Over a period of many years he had been wont to grace these international gatherings with his airy presence ; he knew most of the correspondents and some of the diplomats, and it was fun to watch history in process. He said : " Wickthorpe will probably be with the British staff." Irma replied : " Let's go ! "

After their fashion, at half a day's notice, they tossed their things into their bags : winter things as well as summer, because, while it would be warm in Italy, there would be heavy snows in the Alpine passes. No need to make detailed plans ; they would go like the wind, where they listed, and in due time would write or wire instructions for their packing, and for the twenty-three-million-dollar child and her staff. Beauty was staying on at *Bienvenu*, having not yet decided upon plans for herself and husband ; she might be in England visiting Margv when Irma and Lanny arrived. Such was the delightful way of the rich. When a hot spell came, they packed up and moved to the north ; when chill winds arose, they fled south again ; they were birds of passage, beautiful and elegant birds of passage for whom the modern world had been made.

VII

First the route along the Côte d'Azur, to Lanny as familiar as the letters which composed his name. Then the Italian Riviera, full of exciting memories. All border passport controllers had little books with alphabetical lists of undesirable characters ; but Lanny's sins were eleven years old, and he trusted that the list wouldn't go back that far, and it didn't. Up through the passes to Milan at the loveliest season of the year, with fruit trees in full blossom, turning the humblest garden into a place of magic, filling the air with delicious scents. Lanny loved this country and its people—at least the poor ones, so cheerful and friendly—and he jabbered away with them whenever he had a chance. If he hated those in authority he kept his mouth shut—even when alone with his wife, who considered all authority as necessary, or it wouldn't exist.

Lanny knew the beautiful mountain lake, forty or fifty miles long. Stresa is one of its smaller towns, popular with tourists and crowded with tile-roofed villas and hotels. They hadn't wired for accommodations, because Lanny thought his name might attract the attention of his old enemies, the Fascist *Militi*. There were plenty of other resorts along the shore, and no trouble to drive a few miles. The precaution proved wise, for never had a conference been so thoroughly policed. Perhaps it was the recent killing of King Alexander and Barthou ; Mussolini was harbouring some of those conspirators and protecting them, but when he himself was on the scene it was quite another matter.

Here in Stresa the *carabinieri* were everywhere, and in hotels and other public places were swarms of men whom no one had trouble in recognizing as detectives. The sessions were held on a tiny island having one great palace and nothing else, so there was no difficulty in protecting its secrets ; motor-boats with armed police kept intruders away, and an aeroplane overhead made certain that no adventurous revolutionist dropped bombs on visiting statesmen. Lanny and his wife arrived after dark, and the first thing they noted was search-lights in the sky and others sweeping the surface of the lake from motor-boats.

Lanny thought it the part of wisdom to establish his social status ; so, as soon as they were in their suite, he put in a call to the hotel which had been set aside as headquarters of the delegations. It was evident from the sounds on the telephone line that one or more persons were listening in, and that was what he wanted. He asked for the secretary of Lord Wickthorpe. "Certainly, Mr.

Budd, I am sure His Lordship will be glad to speak to you." Then, after a wait : " His Lordship wishes to know if you and Mrs. Budd will come for tea to-morrow afternoon." After that, Lanny could be sure that, however carefully the authorities might watch him, they wouldn't request him to leave.

VIII

At these conferences there was always a press headquarters, a sort of clubhouse for the swarms of correspondents. Thus it was easy to get hold of Pietro Corsatti. Would he have dinner ? Indeed he would ; but why not come with Pietro and meet some of the bunch ? This pleased Lanny more than anything ; it had been his function to pay the bill, and his privilege to listen while the men who knew what was going on in the world shared their " tips " with one another. Most of them had known the grandson of Budd's over a period of years ; he wouldn't betray any confidences, and if they mentioned him and his plush-lined wife as among the visitors at a diplomatic " gab-fest," that would enhance the prestige of a budding *Salonnière*. The reporters liked Irma because she was easy-going and informal, having been trained in café society ; they cultivated Lanny because he had social contacts which might make him a source of news.

The correspondents were having the devil of a time here at Stresa, they reported. Never had speech-making statesmen been kept so aloof as out on that island, where Napoleon had once entertained an Italian diva. The future of Europe for a hundred years might depend on what they were deciding, but the information you got was contradictory, and the Americans were having to pad their dispatches with accounts of Blackshirt parades and the loveliness of almond blossoms. The journalist with an Italian name and a Brooklyn accent cried desperately : " For Pete's sake, get Wickthorpe to spill some beans ! " Lanny replied : " For Pete's sake, I'll do what I can."

Laval and Flandin were representing France ; a queer pair, one squat, the other several inches taller than anybody else and that much duller—Pete said they were the calamity twins of France—and MacDonald and Simon representing England. Il Duce was here, representing himself ; he had just issued decrees doubling his own army, and now France and England were trying to buy him to some programme that would at least look like restraining Hitler. What price was Musso demanding, and how much of it was he going to

get? These were the questions which tormented the journalists; and the extreme secrecy meant bad luck for somebody. Austria, perhaps? Or was it Abyssinia? "Poor niggers!" exclaimed one of the Americans; he had read Thoreau in his youth, and didn't like killing, but fate had made him into a war correspondent, and his editors had sent him here because they thought that something was "cooking."

A few months ago there had been an "incident" at a place called Ual-Ual, which wasn't in any gazetteer, and which consisted of a well and some mud-huts in the Ogaden Desert near Italian Somaliland. Native troops accompanying a border commission had driven some Italian troops away. This had been an insult to Il Duce's dignity, and his kept press denounced the intolerable conditions of disorder existing in this backward land. To watchful editors it meant that Mussolini was getting ready to start that empire which he had been promising his young Blackshirts for a matter of twelve or thirteen years. Pete pointed out that the headwaters of the Nile are in that land, and surely Britain wasn't going to let anybody dam them and divert them from the cotton-fields of the Sudan!

So they argued outspokenly, and Il Duce's badly disguised detectives sat at near-by tables and listened, scowling. Lanny, the most vulnerable person there, said the least. Later in the evening they heard shouts in the square outside, and they left the *trattoria* and joined the throngs which were hailing their stuffed-shirt leader. "Duce! Duce!" They made it into a sort of chant, accenting and spacing the two syllables equally, so that nobody could have been sure whether they were saying "Doo-chay" or "Chay-doo." The great empire-builder was in a hotel in front of them, and presently he appeared on a balcony, clad in breeches and riding-boots. Appearing on balconies is one of the principal functions of a dictator, and always a spotlight is ready to make him look grand in his shiny uniform—even if he is rather short and thick through the middle like the leader of the Fascisti.

Fifteen years had passed since Lanny had first seen this man of destiny in San Remo, a thin, pasty-faced fellow with a little black moustache and a black suit and tie; a renegade Socialist editor, being cursed in public by one of the men he had betrayed. Now, walking on the Promenade with Irma and their friend, Lanny told the story of this encounter, and what he had learned about the "Blessed Little Pouter Pigeon" from a couple of his former associates. Before the World War he had appeared in Milan, a wretched half-starved youth, and the Socialists had taken him in,

fed him, and taught him all he knew. Now those Socialists were dead, or in exile, or slowly dying on barren rocky islands in the Mediterranean; but this new Cæsar was grown so great that he appeared on illuminated balconies, and when Americans wished to say what they thought of him they had to refer to him as "Mister Big."

IX

In every town where a conference took place there was always some resident English family of social acceptability, to whose home the wearied statesmen might repair for refreshment. Wickthorpe's secretary phoned to Mr. Budd, saying that he and his wife were invited to such a home on the lake shore. They were received by an elderly lady and her two unmarried daughters, and introduced to other English residents—the hostess had made friends or enemies for life by extending or withholding invitations to this affair. Members of the diplomatic staff drifted in, including the grey-haired and moustached Prime Minister whom Lanny Budd looked upon as a pathetic renegade; but the renegade didn't know it, of course, and bowed graciously, saying: "Ah, Amer-r-icans! I am r-r-really fond of your country." Tea was served in lovely Dresden cups, and in addition to little cakes there were scones in honour of a Prime Minister who came from Lossiemouth. They were passed round by means of a wicker table mounted on rubber-tyred wheels and called "the curate," because its invention had deprived large numbers of amiable young Englishmen of their principal social function.

Wickthorpe was glad to see them, and was especially attentive to Irma, in a dignified and respectful way. He had always behaved thus, and Lanny's mother had observed it and had hinted at it tactfully to her son; but Lanny wasn't going to worry about any such matter—Irma had always had hosts of friends, both women and men, and how could people help admiring her? "Ceddy," that is, Cedric Masterson, fourteenth Earl of Wickthorpe, introduced her to distinguished persons, including the long and clerical-looking Sir John Simon. Lanny saw the ladies watching and putting their heads together, and knew they were saying: "That's Irma Barnes, the American heiress." They would look at Lanny and add: "That chap is her husband—some sort of art broker, they say." No use expecting people to say kind things behind your back in fashionable society, for they have social positions to guard and would cheapen themselves if they allowed too many to break into the sacred precincts.

It was Saturday afternoon, and everybody seemed to have plenty of time. Two distinguished diplomats played croquet with young ladies on the lawn, and others sat in groups under blossoming magnolia trees and talked about friends at home. Wickthorpe introduced Lanny to a couple of young fellows who were filling the same role of secretary-translator which the American had played in Paris at the age of nineteen. They and His Lordship talked freely about what had been happening on *Isola Bella*—it had all been settled that morning, it appeared, and the conference was ready to adjourn. The independence of Austria was to be guaranteed, and the three powers pledged themselves to oppose "by all practicable means" an evil thing called "unilateral repudiation of treaties." That meant, of course, Hitler's recent pronouncement about re-arming; and Lanny was greatly heartened—until he began thinking about the word "practicable." He had been among diplomats enough to learn how they said something which seemed to mean something but didn't; how they put in weasel words which would sneak away with the substance of any sentence.

"Just what is practicable right now, Ceddy?" he inquired; and the answer was: "Oh, well, you know we don't want to get into a war."

"I hope not," said Lanny. "But suppose Hitler won't stop for anything less?"

"Well, but he's got to, old chap. If we fight Hitler, we're both playing Stalin's game."

"Yes, I know. But if you don't fight, maybe you're both playing Hitler's game."

They had no time for further discussion. As Wickthorpe was turning away he remarked: "I say, Lanny, you understand that what we've been talking about is strictly under your hat."

"Oh, of course," said the other, with a pang for his friend Pete. "But, if it's settled, why don't you give it out?"

"Well, you see, some of our leading papers don't publish on Sunday, so we're holding the announcement for Monday morning."

X

The news was released in due course, and the diplomats entrained for Geneva, where the Council of the League was due to meet, and, it was hoped, take a firm stand against the violators of law. Brass bands played the delegates out of Stresa, and marching throngs of Fascisti sang to them of the future glories of Italy. Lanny and Irma

bade farewell to their friends and set out through the Alpine passes on the way to Vienna. It was the season of spring floods and avalanches, which are no respecters of social position; but Lanny was a skilled driver and Irma was not the nervous sort, so they enjoyed some of the world's most celebrated scenery.

In Vienna he had an appointment with one of the old empire's nobility who had at last consented to put a price on some of his art treasures. They were invited to tea in one of those half-abandoned marble palaces on the Ringstrasse, and looked at old masters and argued over what they would bring in the American market. This displayed an elderly aristocratic couple in the worst of lights to Irma Barnes; but they had the titles and manners and there could be no denying that they had once had the "stuff."

Poor souls, they had lost the war, and it was necessary to treat them with great consideration. What seemed small sums to a utility king's daughter were of the utmost importance to them, and they suffered agonies of soul under the process of deflation which Lanny felt obliged to put them through. "If you really want me to make sales, this and this and this is what you will have to accept." They wanted so badly to get an offer; but Lanny was immovable. "I do not make offers. I tell you that at such and such a price I will try to find you a buyer; but you must make the offer." In the end, close to tears, they gave way.

A night at the opera, and next day the motorists were at the Polish border. It wouldn't do to pass so close to the Meissners without stopping, so Lanny telephoned to Kurt and, learning that he was going to Berlin to conduct one of his works, invited him to come along in the car. Driving to Stubendorf, Lanny said: "Let's not say anything about having stopped in Stresa. They will look upon that conference as an anti-German conspiracy."

Irma, a comfortable person, well satisfied with the world's arrangements, wished that people wouldn't quarrel and upset everybody's peace of mind. She was inclined to take the point of view of those she was with; at least to let them think that she did so. She was sure there ought to be some reasonable settlement of Germany's claims, but she hadn't insisted upon it while having tea with the fourteenth Earl of Wickthorpe and his colleagues. She would agree with the Meissners that Stubendorf ought certainly to be allowed to go back to Germany; but if she had been visiting one of the Polish families of the district—well, she hadn't met any Poles, and their case wasn't clear to her. Both sides had factories, and both needed the coal which came from the mines under these hills. "Why can't they buy it from each other?" she wanted to know, and Lanny

mentioned that profits go to those who own and not to those who buy. "You ought to know that!" he said.

XI

The arrival of this fashionable American couple always created a stir in Stubendorf. Seine Hochgeboren was away, so they stayed the night at the home of Kurt's father, the Comptroller-General of the great estate. They slept in the rather small room which had been Kurt's, and which Lanny had shared with him on his first Christmas visit more than twenty years ago. The Meissners were warm-hearted people, and they still saw him as the gay and graceful lad who had shown them Dalcroze dancing and amused them with his American accent. He hadn't known that he had one, of course, and they had never told him, but had cherished his quaint phrases after he had gone. Now he was here with his heiress wife, and since the pair had been guests several times at the Schloss, it was doubtful if the family of a mere *Beamter* was good enough to receive them. A lot of fuss had to be made and extra food prepared.

Kurt and Lanny played music out of the treasury of four-hand compositions. The family all sang for a while, and it was so lovely that tears ran down the cheeks of the old couple. The father's health was failing, and he wasn't going to listen to music much longer, at least not played on the old piano in his somewhat crowded living-room. They didn't spoil that sentimental evening with talk about politics or anything in the ugly outside world. Irma thought: "Now I am meeting the real Germans; and oh, dear, why can't they stay like this always?"

But no, indeed; Germany was ringed with enemies—*die Einkreisung*, they called it—and they were getting ready to break that ring. In the morning the travellers shifted their bags so as to make room for Kurt in the back seat and they drove into Germany. First they were held up by not very prompt or courteous Polish border guards, and Kurt said: "You see what we have to go through." Then, on the first level plain they came to, uniformed young Germans were drilling in the yet unmelted snows. None of the travellers commented, but all three were thinking: "It is the big new army the Führer has promised!" Later they passed an airport, and planes flew close overhead, as if inspecting a foreign car and its occupants; all three of them thought: "The new fighter planes of General Göring!"

They talked about music, and the paintings that Lanny had

handled, and about Robbie's new business undertaking. Kurt was always glad to hear how Beauty was getting along; he said that she had saved his life after the war, and in the Continental fashion he spoke frankly about the years of happiness she had given him. Once when a sparking-plug fouled and they stopped to have it put right, Irma and Kurt strolled up and down and she told him: "Lanny is behaving much better, and I am really happy about him." She meant it, for like most humans she found it easy to believe what she wanted to. Sometimes it appeared as if life could hardly have gone on in these days of old Europe's trials if it hadn't been for this odd human faculty.

Kurt didn't wish to stay in a fashionable hotel; he had already promised to visit the family of his brother Emil, a colonel in the Reichswehr. He was going to be busy with rehearsals, which his friends might attend if they would be interested. Nothing would have pleased Lanny more, but he had business he must see to. So they parted for a while, and as Lanny drove on to the Adlon he was wondering: "Am I really fooling him? And just how much?" He knew that he was fooling Irma pretty well, and it hurt him; but it was one of those things which couldn't be cured and must be endured.

XII

Lanny had telegraphed Furtwaengler, announcing that he and his wife were on the way; now, in the morning, he phoned the Oberleutnant, whose first words were: "*Ach schade, Herr Budd, you should have been here for the wedding!*"

"Why didn't you let me know in time?" asked the visitor. He meant it for a joke, but the staff officer took it for a rebuke and was profuse in apologies. Only after he had received forgiveness did he feel free to rave over the wonders of that greatest of all German social events, the marriage of the Führer's second-in-command to Emmy Sonnemann, the stage and screen star who had been his official mistress for some time. After the ceremony there had been a reception in the Opera House—the performance had been held up for more than an hour while Minister-Präsident General Göring and his bride stood in the great hall at the head of the staircase, shaking hands with all the eminence of the Third Reich and the diplomatic world.

Lanny said: "I read a lot about it in the foreign press. I saved some clippings for you."

"*Danke schön!*" exclaimed the worshipful young Schutzstaffel

man. "We are collecting everything and will prepare scrapbooks for the National Bibliothek."

"How are the happy couple?" inquired the visitor gallantly, and was informed that they were both sitting on top of the world. The Oberleutnant had become fond of this phrase, which he believed was the very latest American slang, and Lanny didn't suggest how uncomfortable this position might prove to a man of Seine Exzellenz's figure.

Lanny specified what pictures he had come to purchase, and mentioned with seeming casualness that he and his wife had been attending the Stresa Conference. No competent staff officer would fail to get the significance of that. "Seine Exzellenz will wish to see you! Will you hold the wire?" Lanny did so, and presently was told that the Minister-Präsident was due to leave that afternoon and spend a night and a day in the Schorfheide. Would Herr and Frau Budd honour him by coming along? Lanny replied that nothing would give them both more pleasure.

He hung up, and remarked: "So, we are going to see Karin-hall!"

"And Emmy, do you suppose?" asked Irma.

9

Shape of Danger

IN A WHITE marble palace on the fashionable Königin Augusta-strasse lived Irma's friend the Fürstin Donnerstein, second wife of a Prussian landowner and diplomat some thirty years older than herself. She had first met Irma on the Riviera, before the latter's marriage, and had taken a fancy to her; they had gone about together, gossiping about nothing very much. Now the Fürstin had three children in her nursery and was bored, missing that gay free life on the Coast of Pleasure and finding Berlin society stiff, cold, and dull. Her husband's position required that she go out, so she picked up a great deal of news, of which she desired to make the normal use. When Irma came along they would have a regular spree of gossip, the American having to swear that she wouldn't repeat a word of it in Germany.

So it would be: "*Ach, meine Liebe*," and: "*Na, na, meine Gute!*" Hilde, a tall blonde, rather thin for a German matron, smoked too many cigarettes, and perhaps as a consequence of this was nervous and intense in manner. She would begin: "*Man sagt—*" and then she would look about, lower her voice, and say: "Perhaps I'd better not"—which was provoking. She would get up and go to the door of her boudoir and open it suddenly and look out. "You never can tell. One's servants have all become *politisch gesinnt*"—she spoke nine-tenths English and one-tenth German. "It is you Americans who are to blame. They have heard of that *fabelhaftes Land* where there are no class distinctions, where anybody can become rich and nearly everybody does. So now we have a *kleinbürgerliche Regierung*—the little man is on top, and we are prisoners in our own homes. Somebody may report on us, and some official may welcome a chance to show himself *eifrig* at our expense."

Irma had seen in some homes a device called a "cozy," a sort of little tent made of quilting, to be set over the teapot and the hot-water kettle, to keep them warm. Now Irma learned that it was used by Germans to set over a telephone, because they had the idea that there was some secret device which could be installed in the receiver so that outsiders could listen to conversations even when the phone was disconnected. Hilde wasn't sure if it was so, and didn't know how to make sure; so, when talking to Irma she carefully put the "cozy" over the phone, and when they were leaving the room she took it off, so that no servant might see what she had been doing. "*Wirklich*, it is like living in Turkey in the days of the sultan!"

Hilde Donnerstein was no conspirator, nor was her husband; they were simply two members of the old nobility who were, as she said, out of fashion; they resented the tough crowd who had seized the power and the glory for themselves, and they took revenge in telling personal scandals and funny stories about the absurdities of the *Emporkömmlinge*.

"*Ach, meine Liebe!* I must say I don't envy you your visit to that monstrous Karinshall! But I suppose you are curious about Emmy—no doubt you have seen her on the screen. *Ganz karyatidenhaft*—what is it that you say?—statuesque—but as for acting, *äusserst gewöhnlich*; all people of taste stay away. Of course, I suppose an opera house is the proper place for the wedding-reception of an actress. It is characteristic of our time—*eine Filmkönigin* instead of a real one!"

"Lanny says the film queens do it much better," remarked Irma.

"How can we judge? But really, when you consider what the

life of that couple has been—you have heard that their affair has been of long standing ? ”

“ I have heard rumours.”

“ They were getting along reasonably well ; *der dicke Hermann* said : ‘ You know that I cannot marry you, of course ’ ; and Emmy, who is not so bright, didn’t know, but was afraid to say so. But one day the pair were in a motor accident—*schrecklich*—the car into a tree crashes ; *der Dicke* is not much hurt, *aber die Geliebte*, she has her skull cracked and is in hospital a long time, and of course it is something that cannot be hidden, *die ganze Welt* talks ; Hermann must go every day to see her, and it becomes a scandal. Then just the other day *unser*—” The Fürstin wishes to say “ *unser Führer*,” but doesn’t quite dare, even in her own boudoir. She says : “ *Die Nummer Eins* wishes to send his Number Two to the Balkans on a diplomatic mission—you know how it is, we must have allies there, our enemies seek to undermine us in every part of the world ; and Hermann proposes to take his woman with him, she must have a rest, and he will make a little holiday of it. But *die Nummer Eins* says : ‘ *Bist du toll ?* You will force your mistress upon them ? They will take it as an insult ; they will say : “ What do you think we are—niggers, perhaps ? ”’ *Die Nummer Eins* is furious, and gives the fat man a dressing-down. ‘ Marry her ! ’ he says. ‘ I have had enough of scandal in my party—make her your wife, or we are *unten durch* in the Balkans ! ’ So that is how we had this grand *Staatshochzeit mit Empfang*, with gifts the like of which have never been seen in all the world. It is what you say in America, *eine Hochzeit vor dem Gewehr* ! ”

Irma didn’t know these words, but the Fürstin explained that it was when the bride’s father or her brothers come with guns and fetch the ‘groom. Irma said, greatly amused : “ Oh, a shotgun wedding ! ”

II

While Irma was enjoying this high-class entertainment, her husband was looking at an art show, and afterwards driving his car into a Berlin slum. Promptly at the stroke of twelve he passed the agreed-upon corner and picked up his “underground” friend. Spring was here and the day was bright. She had left her heavy coat at home and wore a grey cotton print, the most inconspicuous that could be found ; her hair was parted straight back and covered by a black straw hat—in short, she was a poor working-woman, with no nonsense about her, and in her arms she was carrying a paper bag.

"Is that what you have for me?" he asked, but she said: "No, just groceries. I was afraid to bring what I have until I was sure you were coming."

"What is it?"

They were driving on a little-frequented street, but, even so, Trudi glanced about nervously and lowered her voice. "I have photostatic copies of confidential reports to the Wilhelmstrasse—that is the German Foreign Office—covering the details of our intrigues in various capitals; reports of our ambassadors and instructions to them."

"Good Lord, Trudi!"

"It will not be so easy to make use of them this time, I fear, since they expose the double-dealing of other nations also, and England among them. I cannot imagine any but a Socialist paper being willing to publish them."

"There's one bourgeois paper, the *Manchester Guardian*, which has a reputation for publishing the truth regardless of whom it hurts."

"Well, you will have to be the judge. You might give them to different papers, according to what they contain. For example, dispatches from our ambassador in Rome, telling the inside story of the deal between Mussolini and Laval. You know that Laval went to Rome at the beginning of the year and spent several days with Il Duce. Afterwards he gave the Chamber of Deputies the solemn assurance that he had made no concession imperilling the rights of Abyssinia."

"I made note of his language," said Lanny. "It was most explicit, but even so, I didn't believe him."

"He has made a 'gentleman's' agreement, permitting Il Duce to take the country without the interference of France. What worries Mussolini is that while he's tied up there, Hitler may take Austria; and so they have a mutual guarantee against this."

"If we could prove that, Trudi, we'd blow the lid off the diplomatic tea-kettle."

"Our ambassador states it categorically. Italy has already shipped thirty thousand troops through the Suez Canal, with complete equipment and supplies for a six months' campaign. Operations will begin in the autumn, when the rainy season there is over."

"What else have you in this magic box?"

"You have read about the decision of the Stresa Conference?"

"I was there five days ago."

"All three of the powers have been secretly negotiating with the

German Foreign Office behind one another's backs—that is, they think it's secretly."

"But of course they all find out!"

"The real question is, what is going to be done at Geneva. The Wilhelmstrasse has the assurance that no overt action will be taken. Of course the Nazis don't care about speeches—that gives Hitler a chance to make more speeches and to play upon the persecution complex of our people. A committee of the League will be appointed, but no one of the Big Three is prepared to demand any action to stop German rearmament."

"One of the newspaper men at Stresa told me that," responded Lanny. "It means a complete sell-out of France!"

"The Nazi argument is that they are not arming against the French fleet, but against the Russian. The Soviets have some new submarines, and it is not in the British interest that they should get command of the Baltic."

"There it is again!" exclaimed the American. "Everything goes back to their fear of the Reds. If they have to choose, they prefer Fascism every time."

"There's an intrigue going on between Mussolini and the British over the lake called Tsana, the source of the Blue Nile. Some day there will be a big dam, and the question is whether the waters shall flow to the Sudan or eastward to where Mussolini is going to settle his Fascist families. The British are willing to let Abyssinia go, provided they can have the lake and its headwaters; but Mussolini won't give them enough, and it looks as if there'd be a showdown before the end of the year. The Wilhelmstrasse is happy over that, because it will mean that we can have the *Anschluss* with Austria, and perhaps close the Polish Corridor also. Göring is planning to travel to the Balkans next month to cement alliances there—our new trade routes lie that way, down the Danube with our machinery and munitions, and returning with wheat and oil and raw materials."

III

So there was a diplomatic map of Europe, drawn by the cartographers of the Nazi Führer. Lanny recalled his friend the young S.A. sports director, Hugo Behr, who had been shot in the face during the blood purge of less than a year ago. Hugo's crime had been that he had taken seriously the second half of the label, National Socialist, and had urged that the party should attempt to carry out its promises to the little people of the Fatherland. In his

last days on earth he had explained to Lanny how the course the Führer was following would make him the prisoner of the Reichswehr, or rather of the Junker officers who controlled that highly disciplined fighting-force. "If he bases his programme for re-employment entirely upon armaments, it means that sooner or later we shall have to fight, because that's all you can do with guns and tanks."

Here was the prophecy coming true. Anybody who was capable of thinking could see that the little people of the Fatherland were being led into another slaughter-pit. The trouble was, there were so few people anywhere in the world who could think or were willing to take the trouble; and in Germany so many of them had had their faces blown off, or were shut up in concentration camps, being made into physical and nervous wrecks. Lanny recalled a remark he had heard the Führer make on the subject of the spiritual nature of man: "The greatest of spirits can be liquidated, if its bearer is beaten to death with a rubber truncheon."

"You're right about those documents, Trudi," he said. "They are dynamite, and if they're in a safe place I'd rather wait and get them when I'm ready to leave. My bags are likely to be opened at the hotel; and to-night I'm invited to visit Karinhall, which you must admit is hardly the safest place for them."

"*Unglaublich!*" exclaimed the woman. "How do you manage such things?"

"It is simple. I have a bank draft for a large sum of money, enough to keep the fat General that way for many months to come. Incidentally, his staff officer has offered to show us the wedding-presents, the wonders of which have been broadcast to the world. Don't you wish you could come along?"

"You make me believe in miracles—even if you cannot make me believe in spirits!"

"Oh, by the way, did you go to see that medium?"

"I did, and it was pathetic. She told me I was about to get letter from a dark man."

"Well, it might happen, in spite of all your doubts. You have decided that what I brought you was not a message from Ludi?"

"I have to give up thinking about it; it makes me too unhappy. I have enough problems in this present unhappy world."

"I have had several more séances; but all I got was my grandfather Samuel Budd telling me to hearken to the Word of the Lord; or else the voice of Marcel, telling me that he is painting pictures of a wonderful new world—but his descriptions lack the clarity which characterized his brushwork on earth."

They came back to the documents which Lanny was to carry out of Germany. He said: "I'll do it once more, but after this we'll have to arrange some other way. The Gestapo will be checking on everybody who comes and goes, and they'd be sure to make note if the publications coincide with my departures. And anyhow, I have to go to America for most of the summer."

Lanny didn't give any hint of how he had handled the former job, nor did he ask Trudi what the repercussions in Berlin had been or whether any of her friends had got into trouble. She came to him out of the darkness, and he retired into another darkness; but where they met was a spotlight, and while they were in it they had to watch every step. They agreed that on the day after the morrow Trudi would come to the usual corner at three in the afternoon; that hour was better for Lanny, because by then he could have got his wife tired of looking at paintings and ready to keep some engagement. When the two conspirators saw each other they would not stop or speak; Trudi would go and get the documents, and half an hour later would meet him at a different corner and hand them to him; both of them would make sure they were not being followed, and Lanny would watch both times for the "all clear" signal. This having been agreed upon, he gave her the money he had brought for her, and then set her down in the neighbourhood of an entrance to the Underground. It was the same place where he had once set Freddi Robin down for the last time and the recollection gave him a shiver of dread.

IV

Towards the latter part of the afternoon the huge baby-blue Mercédès limousine of the Minister-Präsident General called at the Hotel Adlon for the American couple and their bags. Wherever this vehicle came, the awe-stricken flunkies bowed low, and the reputation of the foreign guests was made for ever after. The two favoured ones were taken to the ministerial palace, where the Oberleutnant escorted them for the ceremony of viewing the gifts. Three large rooms had been set aside for the exhibition, and a dozen S.S. men in their black uniforms with silver braid and the skull and crossbones had been set to watch the treasures laid out on dozens of long tables. It was like a visit to Tiffany's or Gorham's, only more so. Every sort of jewellery known to man, or to woman, and every design of gold and silver plate and utensil. Der Führer had presented to his loyal friend one of the three existing portraits of Bismarck by Lenbach. The bridegroom had presented to his lady a transparent

blue zircon of enormous proportions—everything in the way of jewels that one woman could carry, diadem, earrings, a bracelet, a ring, a necklace ; the staff officer said it had cost thirty-six thousand marks, and he didn't consider it necessary to lower his voice.

This was glory, this was success ; a long way up the ladder of fame for a man who had started as a humble Reichswehr lieutenant with no special influence, and who had got stuck in the trenches at the outbreak of the World War. But even now the General was only at the beginning of his dizzy ascent—his whole manner told that to his guests ; his step was firm and quick, his laughter exuberant, his handclasp somewhat crushing. He was clad in a white uniform with a pale-blue stripe that matched his car, and his orders and decorations made Lanny think of Tiffany's again.

The bags had been moved into a second car, and with the General and his guests rode two of the older staff officers. Furtwaengler and another youngster followed in a second car, and the bags of all of them in a third. At Lanny's feet was an object covered with a rug, and on the way he kept moving his feet over it ; his expert knowledge told him that it was a sub-machine gun. He couldn't be sure whether it was a Budd, but he knew that the firm had sold thousands of them to the Nazis for the street fighting with the Communists. *Der dicke Hermann* was taking no chances !

All the way the great man talked about aeroplanes, and aviation as the science of the future. He talked technicalities, because Lanny was an insider. He wanted to know how Budd-Erling was coming along, and Lanny, who had had a letter just before leaving, had no reason for withholding the fact that the frost was out of the ground in New England and the foundations due to be completed. In his boyhood he had learned the technical terms of ballistics, and in his recent talks with his father he had learned about wing loading and supercharging, increased compression ratios, anti-knock ratings, controllable pitch propellers. When he mentioned casually that Robbie had actually got an engine with a thousand horse-power, the General demanded to see one right away. Lanny grinned and said : " It will please Robbie greatly to have you make the first approach."

The head of the Prussian state had apparently not learned fear from his recent motor accident. They drove at high speed, with a long mournful horn warning other cars out of the way. It was dark when they arrived in the Schorfheide forests and all the visitors saw was a blaze of lights in the new palace, called a " hunting-lodge." Lanny had seen a number of these constructions, in both the New World and the Old, so there was nothing novel to him in a great hall with a huge fireplace, a long banquet table, bearskins on the

floor and heads of many kinds of antlered creatures on the walls. All you needed was a quarter of a million in any currency, and architects and interior decorators would turn you out such a job complete in three or four months; a good steward would get you a trained staff of servants in forester's livery, or military or medieval or *opéra bouffe* as preferred.

But not a *Filmkönigin*—no, that was something you had to go out and find for yourself, and it would cost you more. Emmy Sonnemann was built on generous lines, equipped to play Brünnehilde or any of the other Choosers of the Slain; in fact she had about reached the point where if she became any plumper it would be *bouffe*. But it would no longer matter, for it had been announced that she was going to make only one more stage appearance, and then would do her duty to the Fatherland and set an example to other German brides. She had abundant blond hair, bright blue eyes, placid features, and colour which you couldn't be sure about, since she might have brought her make-up artist with the rest of her wedding-cortège. Her manners were those of the stage, rather than of the aristocracy; she welcomed her guests with effusiveness, pressed food and drink upon them, called them by their first names, and afterwards sat on the arm of her bridegroom's chair and kissed him affectionately. Her first husband had been a leading Communist, and Lanny wondered what impression, if any, that had left upon her mind. He would have liked to be alone with her and try to find out.

She was obviously a kindly and somewhat naïve person, and Irma liked her. Easy to see why audiences came to look at her on both stage and screen; also, why directors avoided giving her roles which called for the manifestation of intense passion. When the two guests were in their own room they carefully avoided expressing opinions, for the architect of Karinhall would hardly have failed to include wiring for espionage. However, when the two were lying in bed, Irma whispered softly: "Oh, Lanny, that poor woman!"

"She seems to have got what she wants," ventured the husband; to which the wife replied, still in whispers: "What do you suppose *der Dicke* weighs?"

V

In the course of two years of power the Minister-Präsident General had added a number of new titles to his list; besides being Reichsminister without Portfolio and Minister of Aviation and Chief of the German Air Force, Field Marshal and General of the

Gestapo, and President of the Reichstag and of the Prussian State Council, he was also Minister of Forestry and Master of the Hunt ; which meant that it was a part of his role to be a country gentleman and have fine horses even though he rarely hoisted himself on top of one. Now he wanted to show his splendid estate to his guests, and it was a bore to them both, because Irma had been brought up on an estate and didn't care a hang about it, and Lanny had had to entertain country gentlemen by looking at their estates ever since he had been a small boy and had really enjoyed it. Emmy went along, because she was a bride and it was her duty to follow her man and tell him that his possessions were the most wonderful in the world. Lanny and Irma assented meekly and didn't dare look at each other for fear of revealing what was really in their minds. One feature of the place was a shrine to Karin, the owner's former wife, and before this a candle was always kept burning.

Afterwards the General governed Prussia over the telephone ; as always when angry, he shouted as if he expected to be heard without a wire. Then he summoned Lanny to his study for a talk, and the playboy felt the cold blue eyes of the wholesale killer boring into him. For a matter of four or five years Lanny had been speculating about the possibility of telepathy, and now he was thinking : "*Ach, du lieber Gott*, suppose it should start working now ! "

But it didn't. This Hermann the Great was neither medium nor conjurer, but had to get his information by the ordinary objective method—hiring agents of very little competence, so he complained. If he could get valuable tips by social blandishments and a few smiles from his *Filmkönigin*, it would be a bargain. Apparently what he wanted was to be told about Stresa, and about the prospects at Geneva, where the League was now carrying on its solemn procedure of condemnation. Had Göring's agents in Italy reported to him that Irma Barnes and her husband had been socially received by the English residents of Stresa, and introduced at a tea-party to MacDonald and Simon ? Anyhow, *der Dicke* would only have to listen for a while, and he would hear his art broker refer familiarly to the leading statesmen of all three of the Stresa allies.

Lanny had lain awake in the small hours of the morning, reflecting upon the peculiar problem confronting him. As before, he had to assume a pose of omniscience before the fat General and yet tell him nothing he didn't already know. Also he had to use care not to employ too many of the facts which Trudi had told him. Some of them he couldn't leave out, because they were the salient facts of the hour and had been told to him by others, also. But he must be careful not to assemble them in such a way that if the documents

were ever published it would flash over Göring's mind : " The very things that Lanny Budd revealed ! "

VI

The art expert began with a summary of the situation which the cynical Pete had allowed him to read before it was put on the wire to New York. " My general impression is that you and the Führer haven't much to worry about in this case ; you have got away with it, as we say in America. You got a slap on the wrist at Stresa, and you may get several more in the course of the year, but nobody is coming after you with a gun."

" We are sitting in at a poker game," responded the General, " and playing for very high stakes."

" Your hand is not a strong one ; but the same is true of your opponents. It happens that this game is different from poker in that nerve counts for even more. Also, it is possible to change the rules in the middle of the game—which cannot be done at cards."

The General smiled ; he was continually being impressed by the intelligence of this seeming-idle young man, and that was why he desired so greatly to put him to work. " Then you don't believe our opponents will try to put ' sanctions ' on us ? "

" What I believe, Hermann, would be of no use to you. What I am telling you is the general impression among insiders, both the diplomats and the newspaper men, of whom I happen to know a number. On Isola Bella most of the time was spent figuring out how they could appear to do something while really doing nothing. Large elements of the public in both France and Britain clamour for action, and so it is necessary to appear determined, even menacing ; but no one of the countries is willing to move, because no one can trust any other. Take Britain and Italy—what agreement can there be between them, now that Mussolini has definitely committed himself to the raid on Abyssinia ? Is Britain going to let him have Lake Tsana and get his foot into the door of Suez ? Of course not ! "

" You think he has really committed himself ? "

" With all those troops in Eritrea and more on the way ? Are they going for that hellish climate ? And why does Mussolini go to such trouble to make a bargain with Laval ? Il Duce was staggered by what he was able to get—he hadn't believed there was a man in all France who was fool enough to make such a deal."

" What deal do you mean ? "

"*Na, na, Hermann!* You know much more about it than I!"

"I have heard rumours, naturally; but I am interested to see if your information confirms mine."

"Well, they have a hard and fast understanding that France will not interfere with Mussolini's adventure and that Laval will co-operate with Mussolini in making sure that you do not move into any of your lost territories."

"Is that generally known in the diplomatic world?"

"It is known to those who have a right to know. I got all the details in Paris as soon as the deal was made. It happens that my father and I know men who were Laval's paymasters before he made so much money of his own. He still consults them."

"Precisely what does Laval think he is getting out of such an arrangement?"

"He is fool enough to imagine that he is getting an ally. I could tell him otherwise, because it happens that I have known Mussolini from of old; I heard him orating when I was a youth, and my father was a friend of the American ambassador to Italy at the time that Mussolini made his famous march to the Eternal City in a Pullman car. Richard Washburn Child was what his last name implies; he thought he was saving civilization by getting the House of Morgan to lend Mussolini two hundred million dollars to start his empire. Just so Laval now thinks he is saving France by becoming a friend of the man who is teaching the children of his Balilla that Nice and Savoy and Corsica and Tunis are all parts of the new Roman empire."

"How long will the French public be content with that course?"

"It does not depend upon the public, but upon the Comité des Forges. My father and I visited Zaharoff not long ago and I listened while they canvassed the situation thoroughly; the attitude of these men is precisely that which you know in Germany—I have heard Thyssen and Hugenberg explain it in the days when they were backing you: they want law and order, and the putting down of the Communists. In France now there is a strong movement for a Front Populaire among Reds of all shades, and the big business men are looking for any leader, any movement, any alliance that will counteract it. They would be perfectly willing to do business with you if you would allow them their share of Eastern European markets."

"Would you be willing to take a message to these men from me?"

"It would not be to your advantage if I did so. I would be putting a label on myself, and from then on they would be careful

what they said in my hearing. As it is, I am an American, and therefore a neutral ; a gentleman idler, and my questions are naïve. They talk even more freely to my father, since he is one of their sort, and in return he tells them what they wish to know about America. You should understand my relation to my father. He expected me to become his assistant ; he educated me for that from boyhood and taught me to keep all his business secrets. As a munitions salesman he dealt with persons high up in the different countries ; to me a general was somebody to take sailing and an ambassador was somebody I could beat at tennis because he was apt to be out of condition."

VII

So an American playboy prattled away, tossing the names of the world's greatest as if they had been so many brightly coloured balls for a juggler. Was he telling Hermann Wilhelm Göring anything Göring didn't know ? He hoped not. But everything he said was right, and in each case Lanny provided several different sources from which he might have got the particular item. He didn't say that he was an intimate friend of Ramsay MacDonald and Sir John Simon and Anthony Eden and the rest ; he merely told anecdotes about their personal peculiarities, and quoted them as having said the things which they would and must have said. It was hard to name anybody he hadn't listened to.

He talked about the negotiations over naval limitations between England and Germany, which were supposed to be the most precious of state secrets at the moment ; he mentioned offhand and as a matter of course the twelve sea-going submarines which Germany was building at Wilhelmshaven—in spite of the Versailles prohibition and the *démentis* of the Wilhelmstrasse ; also the tonnage of the battleships in process. Of course Germany was building against Russia and not against France—at least that was what Laval and his friends wanted to believe. "It may be different when you are ready to move into the Rhineland," said the playboy, with a smile, and the fat General didn't attempt to deny or to contradict any of these bold and undiplomatic assumptions. The General must have been wondering whether he himself had been talking in his sleep ; or perhaps whether the American had been consulting that Polish medium whom they kept in their home and about whom Lanny's wife had been telling Hermann's wife !

The upshot of it all was that Göring realized he had a valuable friend, and at an absurdly low price ; it occurred to him that it

might be the part of wisdom to raise the price at once. He said : "*Sagen Sie mal*, Lanny ; you're having trouble with the rest of those paintings, I imagine. Are the prices too high ? "

" I'm rather afraid they are. You will remember I warned you ; nobody has as much money as they had ten years ago—save only yourself, Hermann."

The fat man tossed back his head. It was really impudent, and tickled him greatly. He was experiencing that which caused the kings of old days to have a court jester : boredom with sycophancy, the cloying effect of flattery, the need of the human system for some new flavour, some pungency or tang in social intercourse.

" I have offered to divide with you," said the master of all Prussia, " and I put no limit on your demands."

" I am an art expert," replied the American, " and I like to find purchasers for beautiful masterpieces."

" Well, since you must have it that way, I'll reduce the price of mine. Would that help ? "

" It might, if you wish to dispose of them."

" *Jawohl*, suppose I make a cut of ten per cent. all along the line. Or would twenty be better ? "

" It would be wiser not to ask me about that, since I am representing my clients, and it is my duty to get them the lowest prices I can."

" I'm willing to take my chances. You sell the rest of the paintings for what you think fair. I want to show my confidence in you."

" That is very kind," said Lanny. " I can't recall that any owner of a painting has ever taken that attitude to me."

" Art is not my principal interest in life just now," replied the fat commander. " There was a twinkle in the cold blue eyes, and for the moment he seemed human ; Lanny had to keep saying to himself : " Don't forget, he's the killer ! "

VIII

Late in the afternoon one of the staff cars took the guests back to Berlin, and in the morning Lanny went to the former Johannes Robin palace and presented his bank draft, inspected the three paintings, and saw them carried to his car. He received another of the invaluable bills of sale, also the exit permits for himself and wife. Irma had proposed that they start at once, but Lanny had pleaded that there were art shows he really should take in. Irma had made

a luncheon engagement, to be followed by a session of a game called bridge, whose rules are international and are not changed while the game is in progress.

So, at a quarter to three o'clock Lanny was driving in the Moabit district, turning many corners and watching in his little front mirror to make certain that no other car followed the same eccentric course. He rolled through one stone canyon after another, endless vistas of those six-storey tenements which have become standard for wage-slaves in Megalopolis throughout the world. Here they were cleaner and less dingy than in any other city Lanny had visited, and now in bright spring weather the flowers in window-boxes made the scene almost cheerful. Nobody except a few children paid any attention to a car rolling quietly, and there was no need to come through the same block twice, for there was an oversupply of blocks, and except for the names at the corners a stranger could not have told one from another. It was the same with the people of the neighbourhood; subdued and standardized creatures, prisoners of the machine, cliff-dwellers of capitalism.

With his watch on the seat beside him Lanny came to the familiar corner on the stroke of fifteen o'clock, as they called it on the Continent. He looked for the figure in the grey print dress and the little black hat, but he did not see it, and slowed up his car to look down the intersecting street from which on previous occasions she had appeared. But she wasn't there, nor was she on the street down which he drove. They had set their watches together, but of course one of them might have got wrong, so after driving a couple of blocks he made a right turn, coming around two blocks and back to the appointed corner. Again he watched in every direction; but no Trudi.

He was beginning to be worried. She had always been prompt on the minute, and he knew that nothing would keep her from this appointment except sheer physical disability. They had repeated the details of their understanding so carefully as to preclude the possibility of mistake. If she had come too early, she would surely not have gone away without waiting or coming back on her tracks to look for him. Perhaps she had done so while he was making his encirclement; so he drove down the street again, this time making a left turn, so as to take him around two different blocks and avoid making his car conspicuous. He studied the street signs to make sure there was no mistake; this was the corner, and the time was now fifteen minutes past the hour.

He kept up this procedure for quite a while, driving this way and that, circling all the four blocks which made the intersection and

coming back again and again. He decided that one of them must have misunderstood ; Trudi must be at the other corner agreed upon, the one where he was to have received the documents. He drove to that corner, and repeated his procedure of driving around one block and then another ; but in vain. He came back to the first place, and did more circling, keeping a look-out in every direction—not merely for Trudi, but for Stormtrooper or other Nazi uniforms, policemen, or loiterers who might betray interest in a deluxe motor-car.

IX

At last the sickening conviction settled itself in Lanny's mind : Trudi Schultz wasn't keeping this appointment, and there was nothing to be gained by waiting any longer. He gave up and drove at random on one of the boulevards, so as to think without interruption. Something had happened to his fellow-conspirator, out in that darkness into which she disappeared ; something serious, for nothing less would have stopped her. She might have been struck in the traffic, or have met with some other serious accident ; but far more probable was the thing from which Lanny's mind shrank in agonized dread—that the Gestapo had got her !

It might be, of course, that they were looking for her ; she had received a warning and had fled ; she was "sleeping out"—the phrase used by these "underground" people to describe the condition when they did not dare come to their homes or to stay in any one place for two consecutive nights. If that was so with Trudi she would surely drop him a note to the Adlon ; she would find some phrase to convey to him the idea of danger. They had talked about this, and she would be careful to write so that the shrewdest police agent would find nothing suspicious.

Of course, if the Gestapo had actually got her, they would be torturing her, trying to wring her secrets out of her. They might have had her for the past two days, and if so, that graceful and active figure would be a cringing and shuddering wreck. The thought of it made cold sweat come out on the forehead of Lanny Budd ; made him dizzy, so that he had to stop his car at the side of the Potsdamer Platz and turn his face from the passers-by. He thought only of Trudi, and not of possible danger to himself—for he was certain that this woman would die as many deaths as need be before breathing the name of one of her friends. But then he thought : "They may have Monck, too !" He thought : "Monck may be their agent !" At no time since their first meeting had

Trudi mentioned this man, and Lanny had no idea where he was or what he was doing. If he was a spy, or if he gave way and talked, then Lanny himself was in serious danger, and instead of wandering distractedly about the streets of Berlin he ought to be getting his wife and his belongings and streaking it for the border.

Once more a lover of *die schönen Künste* came face to face with the tragedy which had befallen Germany. One of the world's most civilized peoples had got into the clutches of this monstrous thing, this lunatic's dream turned into reality and setting out to uproot and destroy every humane and decent influence among sixty millions of people! If you were a citizen of this land you had to submit and become its slave; to sweat and toil and bleed for it, to share all its vileness and its crimes, to let it take your children and distort their minds and make them into little monsters in its own image. Either that or else sacrifice for ever your safety and peace of mind; become a hunted creature, with a hunted soul; know that the evil thing was stalking you, dogging your footsteps day and night, lurking in your home, bribing your servants, teaching your own little ones to report you and bring you to destruction! You had to live in the knowledge that the slightest mis-step, a single betraying word or even look—or for that matter the lie of an enemy, a discharged employee, a disgruntled servant, a rival in love or in business—might serve to throw you into an underground dungeon and subject you to such tortures that you would cry out for death!

Lanny was back in the days of Freddi Robin, when he had waited and feared and imagined dreadful things—none of them worse than the reality. Hoping for a telephone call or a message; waiting hour after hour, day after day, for something which wasn't going to come. Then at least he had had Irma to whisper to; they could go out in the car and indulge in the privilege of normal human beings, to say what they thought. But now he had nobody; he had to carry this burden alone, and have it increased by the necessity of acting a part and keeping his wife from guessing that he had trouble on his mind.

At first he thought he couldn't stand it. He would take Irma in the car, tell the truth, and throw himself on her mercy. But he knew that she wouldn't have any mercy; she had told him the state of her mind and given him fair warning. She had suffered the Freddi

affair because she had to ; because Freddi had been the brother of Lanny's brother-in-law, and Irma had been a guest in the home and on the yacht of Freddi's father. Those were ties which you couldn't refuse to acknowledge, much as you might hate and resent them. But what did Irma owe to Trudi Schultz ?

She had met Trudi two or three times, rather casually ; once at an evening reception at the school, where she had disliked everybody ; again when the young artist couple had been invited to a gathering in the Robin palace, where they had felt out of place and looked it. To Irma all shades of Pink were Red, and if the Schultzes weren't that, they were dupes like Lanny himself. They had brought on this Nazi terror, they had " asked for it," in the current American slang ; now, if they wanted to overthrow the German government that was their business, and if Lanny wanted to help them it was Lanny's business, but in neither case was it going to be the business of Irma Barnes.

No, Lanny must go back to the hotel and talk about the pictures he had seen ; he must invent some excuse for remaining in Berlin, for he was determined to come once more to the appointed corner both at twelve and at fifteen o'clock. Something might have happened ; Trudi might have had a fainting-spell owing to lack of nourishment ; she might have fallen and broken her ankle. He must get hold of an afternoon paper, to see if there was any story about an unidentified young woman being knocked senseless by a taxi-cab or a bandit. Also, he must look in the amusement section for an entertainment that he could persuade Irma to be interested in. When he got back to the hotel he must call up somebody and make a date to see an old master and try to get a price on it.

These activities would help to keep his mind off the idea that the General's bloodhounds might be hot on his trail ; that the General's torturers might be sharpening their knives and practising the shrill whistling sounds of their whipping-rods. Lanny Budd, who had made an effort to enjoy the hospitality of Karinhall and had succeeded reasonably well, now thought : " That fat slob may be looking over those stolen reports and Trudi's confession ! " He thought : " I ought to have shot the son-of-a-bitch while I had a chance." But no, that wouldn't have changed anything, really. Some other capable Nazi would have carried on, and the system would have become yet more ruthless and determined. What was needed was truth-telling about it, the shouting of its crimes from all the house-tops of the world ; and after that—Lanny tried to peer into the future, but it was like trying to see to the bottom of a volcano in eruption.

XI

Irma hadn't arrived when he reached the hotel, so he had more time to get himself together. He consulted his lists and found a picture on which he could possibly get a price; if he did so, he would send a few cablegrams and have an excuse to wait for replies. He would take Irma to a movie in the evening, to keep her from getting impatient. "Movies" are run in the dark, and that would be good, because he could shut his eyes and think about Trudi in the hands of the Gestapo without Irma's seeing his fear-stricken face. If he shivered at the thought of what might happen to himself, Irma would attribute it to events on the screen.

No message came; nothing happened; and to Lanny it was like one of those nightmares in which you know that you have been there before. But in the case of Freddy Robin he had been able to get some information because he happened to know one disloyal Nazi. Now that Nazi was dead, and where should he look for another? There wasn't a person in Germany to whom he could mention the name of Trudi Schultz without risk of destroying not merely Trudi and her associates, but his own chances of being able to do anything for Trudi's cause.

Irma proved to be unexpectedly compliant about the extra day's stay. She was trying hard to be considerate and fair. She went with him to look at the painting, and agreed that it was fine, though the price was high. It was so high that he couldn't offer it to his clients; but he didn't tell her that, he said he would send a couple of cablegrams. It would take but a day or two more, he remarked casually; and only then did his wife begin to make a fuss. Really, there had to be some limit to delays; she had made promises to her mother, and also an engagement in London. "I want you to do what you enjoy, Lanny, but it's not fair to turn us both into slaves to this picture business!"

He had made the mistake of choosing a picture which was owned by a person of good repute, no Nazi; so Irma could argue that in case a sale was made, they could surely count upon having the right picture shipped. "Good Lord, I'd be willing to guarantee it; I'll put up the money if the man cheats you!" And what could he say? He pleaded for one day extra, promising to leave the morning after next, and so she gave way.

After all, what sense was there in staying? If there was a question of the documents, Trudi could find some other way to smuggle them out; Monck might bring them to England and send them to Lanny

by registered mail ; Lanny could forward them to Rick by the same means. As for fretting and eating his heart out with anxiety, he could do that just as well in London or on Long Island ; more easily, in fact, because he wouldn't have the extra tension of lying to his wife. If ever he did get a letter from Trudi, if ever he could think of a way to save her, there would still be steamers crossing the Atlantic, and it would be nearly as easy to think up an excuse for returning to Berlin as for staying now.

XII

Was it cowardly of a Socialist to go off and leave his comrade in her plight ? This was Trudi's job, he told himself ; she had chosen it for herself, knowing clearly its risks. She had refused to give him any means of communicating with her, so surely she couldn't blame him for not doing it. Nevertheless, he would go on being dissatisfied with his job, of playing prince consort to an heiress, taking her to picture shows, and lying to her because she wouldn't permit him to have a social conscience. He had told Trudi that he could get money for the cause in that money world and nowhere else ; and Trudi had been glad to have that sort of assistance. But it had worked out to this : that while she lay in the dungeons of the Gestapo, Lanny would drive off in a fancy car, cross the ocean in a luxury liner, and spend the summer in a Long Island show-place with two- or three-score servants to wait on him. No amount of arguing could make that seem a satisfactory division of labour !

No message of any sort ; and on the morning set for their departure Lanny packed his things with a heavy heart. He purposely took a long time, for there was a second mail before noon, and something might come by that. No need for hurry, he told his wife ; it was a clear day and they would drive fast, and catch the Hook of Holland ferry in the evening. He talked about the news from Geneva ; the first mail had brought a card from Pete, and now Lanny was reading aloud an item from the morning paper which showed how correct Pete had been. The League committee had appointed sub-committees, a time-worn device for postponing action. Lanny beguiled his wife into talking about a journalist, born in Naples and raised in Brooklyn, who took a disparaging attitude towards all " wops." Irma, interested in people, let herself be beguiled.

At last, however, the husband could think of no more devices. Their bags were locked up and carried away. He went down and paid his bill at the cashier's window. He asked at the desk for a message, and there was none. The car was at the door, the bags

stowed, and Irma appeared in her quiet but elegant travelling-costume, conscious of her ripe brunette beauty, gazed at by all men and women, and knowing it. A splendid tall personage in uniform opened the door for her and then hastened to open her car door ; the bell-boys bowed, and Lanny followed, scattering largess, one of his functions.

Irma took her seat, and Lanny had gone around to the other side to get in, when there came a bell-boy running with a letter in his hand. Lanny thought : " Oh, God ! " His heart hit him a blow under the throat. It was one of those cheap envelopes that Trudi used, and the handwriting was hers. He opened it hastily and read :

DEAR MR. BUDD,—Very urgent circumstances made it impossible for me to complete the sketches as I hoped. Please accept my apologies. *Glückliche Überfahrt !*

KORNMÄHLER.

He got into the car, a bit dizzy. " What is that ? " asked Irma, and he had an answer thought up in advance : " Young artist whose work I took a fancy to. Promised to send me some sketches, but something went wrong." He handed the note to his wife, so that she wouldn't be looking at him for a few moments.

" Is this why you wanted to wait ? " she inquired.

" No, no," he replied ; " they can come by post just as well."

" Kornmahler," she remarked. " An odd name ! "

" Probably Jewish," he said, starting the car. " Graingrinder " instead of " Miller " ! Trudi had known that he would get the point ; she was in hiding somewhere, and had to change her name in a hurry ! Also, she was telling him that there was nothing he could do about it. Happy crossing ! *Bon voyage !*

BOOK THREE

THE WORST IS YET TO COME

IO

The Head That Wears a Crown

I

IT is the nature of the human creature to have desires, and part of the process of civilization to devise new ones. The creature forms ideals, he sets himself goals, and then labours to attain them. When he has got there he looks about, and finds that it isn't so satisfying as he had imagined ; already he is in process of forming a new ideal, of setting himself a new goal. The unfortunate creatures are of two sorts : those who are so low in the social scale that they have no hope of attaining their desires, and those at the other end of the scale, so well provided with everything that they have nothing to strive for, and thus fail to make the efforts whereby their capacities are developed.

Lanny Budd was one of these latter unfortunates ; or so, at any rate, he felt himself while playing his role of prince consort on the Long Island estate. He was the young lord of Shore Acres, the only male there having authority ; and while the females owned the place and ran it, they deliberately deferred to him and abrogated their rights in his favour. They did this because they wanted him to stay ; they wanted the place to serve his pleasure, and they were puzzled when it failed to do so. They watched him anxiously for signs of discontent, and their attitude was communicated to the servants, who never fail to know the circumstances of those families upon which their lives are centred. Mr. Lanny doesn't like this place, Mr. Lanny wants to go back to Europe and take his wife and daughter with him. If he goes, the staff will be cut down, a lot of us will lose our agreeable jobs ; so let us find out what it is that Mr. Lanny lacks, and let us bring it to him on a silver platter, or perhaps the gold service which is kept locked in the safe built into the wall of the master's bedroom. He is of a friendly disposition, so let us smile and say a cheery " Good-morning." He appears to be preoccupied

right now, so let us steal about our duties on tiptoe. Now he is frowning—have we done anything to displease him ?

There is something peculiar about this young master—really quite unprecedented. Mr. Binks, the second footman, declares that he is a Socialist. He takes several papers full of that sort of stuff, and when he throws them into the trash Mr. Binks reads them, and now he is talking like a Socialist, too ; he says that the rich are a lot of parasites and ought to be put to work like everybody else. For God's sake, how does one please a young master like that ? By being a bad servant instead of a good one ? Mr. Binks reads aloud a sentence which Mr. Lanny himself has marked in the paper, quoting a party named Walt Whitman, who says : "Give me neither masters nor servants ; give me comrades and friends." And what does that mean ? Would Mr. Lanny like us to come and sit down in his study and be comradesly ? And what would Miss Irma make of it ? The older servants still call her Miss Irma ; it is a privilege which marks their rank.

II

The executive head of this estate is Mrs. Fanny Barnes, *née* Vandringham, and she is one of the old sort, with no nonsense about her ; the servants have no difficulty in knowing their place when she is about, and that is most of the time. They know everything about her and her family, because in one of the many cottages of the estate there live aged pensioners, one of whom was Mrs. Barnes's nurse and is now a fountainhead of ancient lore. She can tell how bitterly Mr. J. Paramount Barnes, the utilities king, used to quarrel with his wife, and so he didn't leave the estate to her but to Miss Irma, or rather to a trusteeship, so that his daughter won't come into full possession until she is thirty. Meantime, she is away most of the time, and doesn't care very much about the place, so Mrs. Barnes has everything her own way, and a hard task-mistress she is.

The real centre of the demesne had come to be little Frances, the twenty-three-million-dollar baby, as the newspapers still call her, though the value of the fortune has been cut in half by the depression. But things are coming back, and dividends are being paid again. That ought to please the well-to-do, but it appears that taxes take most of it—the ladies and gentlemen all worry about them, finding fault with the President and calling him bad names. Mr. Lanny grins, teases them, and sometimes gets into an argument. Evidently that is a part of being a Socialist ; you are glad to see the rich taxed, even though you are one of them. A hard thing to imagine !

Mrs. Barnes holds her little grand-daughter as the most precious

treasure and guards her like an old dragon ; has her sleeping in her room, and doesn't mind being waked up by her ; watches her food, sends for the doctor if she sneezes once, and doesn't like to see her taken off the estate. She is jealous of Mr. Lanny's mother, who lives in France and has the child the greater part of the time. But Mrs. Barnes does not let Mr. Lanny see this ; she humbles her pride, trying her best to please him and make him feel that Shore Acres is his real home. She is all the time taking her brother off and scolding him because he talks too much and bores Mr. Lanny with his opinions, especially about politics and the stock market and that sort of thing. "Shut your fool mouth !" she says, loud enough for her maid to hear, and of course the story is all over the servants' quarters before the day is done. Poor Mr. Horace Vandringham, nobody feels very sorry, for he is a big domineering fellow who makes a lot of noise and trouble for the help, giving orders when he has no right to ; he cannot bring himself to realize that he is a down-and-outer, a charity boarder, and the pride of his sister will not permit her to put him definitely among the pensioners.

Lanny and Irma are the privileged ones, the reigning queen and prince consort, whom all serve gladly. Free and easy-going, laughing a lot, good to look at, and always dressed at the peak of fashion—surely there are no people in the world more to be envied than these two ! And yet they aren't always happy, you can see it if you watch them closely. There are stories going the rounds of impatient words and irritated looks. They go out a great deal, and servants don't always find out what happens, but they can guess, because the friends come to Shore Acres and one gets to know them and sees how they behave. They play cards a lot, and some of them lose money which they can't afford. You can tell that by their looks, and sometimes you hear husbands and wives fussing as they go out to their cars—oh, yes, there isn't much kept hidden from servants. A big place like this is a world of its own, and while it doesn't have a newspaper it has many busy tongues.

These playboys and girls—they are getting to be middle-aged but they don't want to admit it—are many of them unhappy and they drink too much. Mr. Lanny drinks very little, and he doesn't like to see Miss Irma take more than a couple of cocktails. The servants know that and don't take the trays to her, at least not while her husband is near. That is one of the things they have fusses about now and then ; not long ago he had to help her up to bed, and next morning they had a real row. Her eyes were red with weeping, and she must have promised, because now she drinks much less ; she tries hard to keep him with her, and not have him go off to the city

and meet the queer sort of people he likes. Once he took her to some radical meeting, and they had an argument in their room. Her maid heard snatches of it and told it in the upper servants' dining-room: he said and she said—always when they tell such stories it is "he" and "she," and they will go on for an hour without mentioning a name. There can be only one he and one she in a feudal community.

III

Across Long Island Sound lies the small city of Newcastle, known as the home of Budd Gunmakers and soon to be better known as the home of Budd-Erling Aircraft. Budd's still made machine-guns and automatic carbines and pistols, but most of it was now a hardware plant, which meant that it had lost its social status in the eyes of the old-timers. Lawford Budd, Robbie's eldest brother, was still vice-president in charge of production, but the president now was a Wall Street man, and the board of directors consisted for the most part of dummies representing a syndicate of financial men. Robbie looked upon it with contempt, and his two sons had withdrawn, and so had several of the executives and plant managers. All had come into the new institution, which was going to be a one-purpose plant, with everything new and shiny, designed and operated according to the latest wrinkles of the scientific management people.

As little as a generation ago, if a man had announced that he was going to build a great factory to produce aeroplanes that would fly faster than two hundred miles an hour, everybody would have known that he was crazy. Indeed, it had been possible for the Wright brothers to stay up in the air over the sand-dunes of North Carolina in their flimsy wood-and-canvas "crate" for many minutes at a time over a period of several months without having the press of the country pay the slightest attention to them. What they were doing was impossible and therefore the stories couldn't be true. But now it had been possible for Robbie Budd to sell five million dollars' worth of stock, and to have some of the best engineers in the country design and erect a building where planes and nothing else were to be turned out on an assembly line, and he wasn't called crazy, but, on the contrary, one of the town's most progressive citizens. All looked up to him and said they had always known that he had it in him; he walked with new dignity, gave orders with quiet assurance, and saw that they were carried out promptly.

Lanny and his wife motored to Newcastle, by way of the ferry to New London, and paid a visit at the Robbie Budd home. Esther,

Lanny's stepmother, welcomed them cordially. His early sins had been forgiven and perhaps forgotten ; he, too, was a success, quite apart from his rich wife—so his relatives and old-time friends tried to make him understand. His profession of art expert was impressive, his musical talents were considerable, he was a linguist and a traveller, almost an ex-diplomat and certainly a friend of the great. The members of the country-club set hastened to honour both husband and wife. If he voiced pinkish opinions—well, it was in the Budd tradition to be eccentric and tell the world to go to the devil, and this appeared to be the newest way.

The sales offices of the new concern were in New York, and here Johannes Robin was in charge. He had got a home for his family half-way between the city and the plant, so that he could commute to either. It was Irma's duty to go with Lanny for a call, and they chose a Sunday afternoon. Papa and Mama, Rahel and the little one were all together again ; they had bought a comfortable old-fashioned New England house of two stories and a dozen rooms, and said they expected to spend the rest of their lives here. Irma thought it was the right way for people of their sort to live—far more sensible than an elaborate marble palace and a yacht. She received graciously their thanks for her kindness in the past, and no great lady could have been less condescending to those who had been reduced in social status. Johannes's hair had turned grey and there were more lines in his face, but he was the same urbane and subtle person with the flavour of old-worldliness about him.

IV

Robbie escorted the couple to see the new plant, now magically approaching completion. Rows of piling had been driven into the marshes, and great dredges had lifted the mud out of one side and dropped it into the other, so as to make steamship berths and docks. The cow pastures had been covered with concrete, and a skeleton of steel had risen over them, and now it had walls of glass and a roof of some patent material. Out of its floors sprouted innumerable bolts, to which machines large and small were to be attached ; the concrete was covered with cabalistic signs in various coloured crayons. Overhead were trolleys on which aeroplane parts would be carried, swinging from steel chains. Everything had been planned to the fraction of an inch, and the blueprints were numerous enough to have covered the floor of the building.

Part of it was a great foundry, and a power plant was already

belching black smoke, making electricity for the construction work and the lighting at night. Already some of the machines were arriving, mysterious in their waterproof wrappings. "Come back in another month," Robbie said, "and you won't know the place; in six months we'll be rolling out our first plane, and you can take a ride in it." He was doing the honours personally, because Irma was his largest single stockholder and was entitled to know just what her money was buying. She was greatly impressed and asked many questions, showing that she was thinking not merely about her money but about the work it was going to do.

Lanny was content to look and let the others talk. He believed in machinery and the power it gave to mankind, but he was dissatisfied with the uses to which it was being put. He dreamed of seeing it collectively owned and serving collective purposes; but there was no use saying a word about this to either his father or his wife. These two belonged together, for they understood and supplemented each other. Irma had the "stuff," and Robbie put it to use for her; they would share the profits, and expect the rest of the world to work for them and do what it was told. For those who were dissatisfied with the arrangement there would be a company police force—already it was being organized and taught its duties by that dependable ex-cowboy Bub Smith, who had taught Lanny how to shoot guns, and had pretended to be a Socialist while acting as bodyguard to Baby Frances at Bienvenu.

V

The consequences of Robbie's social theories became apparent to Lanny while passing through the district surrounding the plant. Robbie expected to have a thousand skilled men at work in a month or two, but it hadn't occurred to him to make arrangements to get them here or provide them with places to live. All that, according to the master's philosophy, was a matter for private enterprise. The men would be skilled workers, getting good pay and having their own cars, and Robbie did his part by setting aside a tract of the company's land on which their cars could be parked. Where the men were going to have their homes was up to them, and the matter was being settled by a swarm of speculators who had got wind of the new project and had come rushing to buy up the adjoining land. Now there were "sub-divisions," and busy salesmen marking out lots with little coloured flags, and bringing people in buses from the cities to look at the land and eat free lunches of hot dogs and coffee.

Already scores of workers' homes were rising; they would be jerry-built, with silly little pretences at elegance but nothing substantial, and as a result the workers would soon be putting in their spare time mending leaky roofs and cracked plaster and windows and doors that got stuck. But all that was their look-out, not the company's.

It was the thought of starry-eyed New Dealers that housing-projects might be constructed at the same time as new factories; that parks and schools and playgrounds might be provided for workers' families from the very outset. That was done as a matter of course in the Soviet Union, and that fact was enough to damn it for the rugged individualists of New England. Lanny knew there wouldn't be any use mentioning the idea now; he had been mentioning it for the past eighteen years—ever since he had met the first Pink while a pupil at St. Thomas's Academy in Connecticut.

He knew in advance every word his father would say; Robbie intended to institute what was called "welfare work" in the new plant, as soon as things got going and he had time to think about it; but he didn't ask Lanny to help, and Lanny knew why—because from the first moment the question of labour unions would come up, and Robbie was going to run an open-shop plant or die in the effort. "Free labour," he called it, and meant by the phrase that the men were free to do what he told them or move elsewhere and do the same for some other hard-headed industrialist. The men who had charge of the providing of rest places and recreation for the workers wouldn't be "cranks" picked out by Lanny, but sensible fellows who knew where their salaries came from. They would organize baseball teams and bowling-tournaments and run a company organ full of pep talks and production slogans.

So Robbie Budd was in triumphant course of producing another centre of industrial feudalism in a land which preached democracy and government by popular consent. Robbie's new town wouldn't be called a company town, and it wouldn't be company-owned, but would be company-run by devices which Robbie didn't have to invent, for they were standard practice in this sweet land of liberty. The workers had come swarming from nobody knew or cared where; they wouldn't know one another and would have no ties or loyalties. They would be free to vote for political candidates every year or two, and they would assume that these candidates were crooks, and for the most part they would be right. Robbie or one of his agents would appoint a political boss to run the town, and at election time would put up campaign funds to elect the candidates whom the boss had chosen. If any men were active in opposing the company's wishes, whether as to policies, unionism, or anything else, those men

would be "let out" and would move elsewhere. Such was the system, and Lanny knew that he wanted no part in it. If he was planning to denounce it, good taste required him to begin somewhere else but the place where his wife's money and his father's time, energy, and reputation were being thrown into the pot.

VI

From a safe distance of three thousand miles the amateur publicist watched events in the unhappy Continent on which he had been born. He saw them through the medium of newspaper dispatches written by men whom he knew; also of letters from Rick, and Raoul Palma, and one to his father from Denis de Bruyne. At the beginning of May the French signed a treaty of mutual defence with the Soviet Union, and Denis said that it represented an effort to bluff Germany. But in order to bluff successfully you have to look as if you meant it, and France didn't mean it. Hitler knew it well, and took the treaty as a basis of propaganda attacks. Pierre Laval meant the treaty so little that it wasn't even presented to the Chamber for ratification, nor was it implemented by any military arrangements. Marianne wouldn't trust her new ally with any of her defence secrets—and what sort of ally was that?

At the end of the month the *fripou mongol* became Premier—a sort of booby prize, Rick said, for having proved himself the most inept of living French statesmen. Early in June, Ramsay MacDonald was replaced as Prime Minister of Britain; poor old pack-horse for the Tories, he had carried them as far as he could, and now they set him down to rest and dream in a pasture called the Lord Presidency of the Council. His place was taken by a steel manufacturer named Baldwin, whose specialities were pipe-smoking and pig-raising. "England also has her two hundred families," wrote Rick, "and they don't have to hide themselves behind the mask of an innkeeper's son." The first act of this new Premier was the treaty for naval parity with Germany, which had been so incredible that insiders had laughed at Lanny when he talked about it. Now John Bull kindly gave the Germans permission to build up to thirty-five per cent. of his own sea-power and actually included the right to parity in submarine building. The tiger that had been let out of his cage was now invited into the family dining-room—though of course seated near the foot of the table.

Benito Mussolini, Blessed Little Pouter Pigeon, was bound by no less than nine treaties to respect the independence and territorial integrity of that ancient land called Abyssinia and sometimes Ethiopia;

but he was going right ahead with his propaganda against it, and shipping soldiers and supplies to his Red Sea bases. This was an excellent thing for the British, who owned most of the stock of the Suez Canal Company and collected goodly sums for every ton of shipping and every soldier travelling through that long sandy ditch. It was also excellent for the New England-Arabian Oil Company which Robbie Budd had founded and recently sold out to Zaharoff and his associates; they were right there with the fuel which Mussolini couldn't do without, and in return they would take the food and wine and oil of the Italian people.

Lord Wickthorpe went with a British mission to negotiate with "the blighter," and when he came back he told Rick about it, and Rick wrote it to Lanny on his old battered typewriter. Bit by bit, like careful traders, the British had offered Il Duce everything he could hope to get, asking only that he should proceed under the forms of legality and let the League hand it to him on a golden platter; but no, he was determined to take it by force, for the sake of the effect on his domestic situation. Some forty years ago these black fighting-men—a mysterious race supposed to be descended from wandering Jews—had given invading Italian troops an awful licking, and Il Duce wanted the glory of wiping out that disgrace. He saw himself going out there and receiving the submission of the "Lion of Judah," then coming home in a triumphal procession and building a monument to himself in the Forum.

The only real obstacle in his path was British public opinion. Four years previously the Tories had got into power in a snap election, in which, polling fifty-five per cent. of the vote, they had got ninety-one per cent. of the House of Commons. Now the British people had proceeded to organize independently and take a poll of eleven and a half millions of themselves, and they had voted something like thirty to one in favour of staying in the League. They had voted thirteen to one in favour of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit—imagine the feelings of Robbie Budd when he opened his paper and read that item of news! With Mussolini's African adventure before them, these amateur voters had been asked if a nation which insisted upon attacking another nation should be stopped by economic and non-military measures, and they had answered Yes by fifteen to one. Asked whether such an aggressor nation should be stopped by military measures, they had answered Yes by nearly three to one. In the face of such a vote Mussolini brought to completion his plans to march into Abyssinia; and what was the League of Nations going to do about it? What was the Tory government of Britain going to do about it?

VII

Soon after his arrival at Shore Acres, Lanny had received a note from Trudi Schultz, forwarded from Bienvenu ; a duplicate of the one he had so nearly missed in Berlin. After that, nothing for a couple of months ; he had to accustom himself to thinking in a special way about these people who were "death's own." Their owner might have claimed them or they might be on the way to him by the route of dungeons and concentration camps. A letter might come, or it might not ; and there was no good fearing or worrying in the meantime.

One came in the middle of July ; a real letter, the longest he had ever received from Trudi : "I am very busy, illustrating a work of fiction dealing with the time of the Emperor Diocletian. The heroine is a persecuted Christian who has to flee ; there are several scenes of vigorous action, and these are difficult for me, because, as you know, my drawings have so far dealt with still life. I should value your opinion of my work highly, and hope you will be visiting Berlin. I am expecting to move and not sure of my address but will get in touch with you when I hear of your arrival. It is convenient that you are a famous person whose comings and goings are reported in the press. By the way, my clerical friend has been ill for some time and is confined to his bed. I do not know just what is the matter with him ; he does not talk about his ailments. Hoping that this finds you and your family well and the picture business thriving, I am, respectfully, Kornmahler."

Lanny didn't need to spend much effort interpreting this elaborate parable. Trudi was being sought by the Gestapo and was in hiding ; she couldn't give an address, but wished him to come to Berlin and find some way to get himself and his picture business into the newspapers ; then she would get word to him. The clerical friend, of course, was Monck, and she was telling the tragic news that he was in a concentration camp but was not betraying his friends.

Serious news indeed for the grandson of Budd's. Maybe the man hadn't talked yet, but he might talk to-morrow, and his first statement would be that the money for the criminal activities of his group was being put up by an American playboy who posed as a friend of the Gestapo General, and, indeed, was getting his money by acting as an art broker for the Nazi second-in-command. That would be of genuine interest to the Secret State Police ; and what would they do about it ? The question called for no little guessing. An art lover of imaginative temperament could spend hours,

especially the wee small ones in the morning, picturing scenes with the fat General, and with the acting head of his Gestapo, a former school-teacher named Himmler who had managed to make himself the most dreaded individual on the continent of Europe. Lanny's first thought was: "That settles me for Germany!"

But very soon he began having second thoughts. Trudi hadn't been obliged to tell him about Monck; she had taken a risk doing it—and why? Obviously, in order to be fair. She was saying: "The danger is greater; perhaps you won't want to come." And what was his answer to be? Should he say: "The danger is too great, and I give up"? If he said that, what would Trudi think of him? What would he think of himself? For more than half a year he had been maintaining his self-respect on the basis that now he was really doing something worth while. He had won new regard from Rick on the basis of being no longer an idler and parasite. Should he now say: "The job was too risky, and I had to quit"? Or should he merely keep quiet, and let Rick go on thinking of him as something he didn't dare to be?

A gnawing began in his conscience and did not stop. He had been justifying his life of luxury by the fact that he met his clients that way, kept up his prestige, and so made his picture deals. Clients would repose confidence in a social equal, but hardly in a subordinate, a professional no matter how truly qualified: such was the world of snobbery. So Lanny made money easily and abundantly; but what did he want it for? So that he could buy new suits of clothes whenever his wife or his mother cast a critical glance at one he was wearing? Or whenever those public enemies, the fashion creators, decided that coats must have three buttons instead of two, or that lapels should be an inch longer and have an angle somewhat more acute?

VIII

Lanny's thoughts were continually occupied with those comrades in Germany; not only Trudi, but all who were helping her. They were not vague abstractions to him; he had met a score of them, and their names, faces, and personalities haunted him. In the happy days before Hitler they had sat in one another's homes, or in the reception room of the school, drinking coffee and eating *Leibnitz Keks*—a modest proletarian form of celebration—and talking about their cause, what it meant to them and how they hoped to make it prevail. They had used large and noble words: *Freiheit* and *Gerechtigkeit*, *Brüderlichkeit* and *Kameradschaft*. They had quarrelled

over points of doctrine and tactics, they had been irritated with one another, they had displayed petty jealousies ; but it had always been understood that deeper than all such things was the powerful bond between them. They were comrades in a sacred cause, human beings in a world of wolves, civilized men surrounded by barbarians, producers in a society of exploiters, plunderers, and parasites.

And now, did all that mean anything ? Was it a real moral force, or had it been only fine phrases, a form of self-indulgence, a system of pretences, a means of self-advancement for the intellectuals and a whim or diversion for the idle rich ? Lanny couldn't get out of it by saying that he had gone among them as an investigator, that he had wished to understand their movement among many others. No, he had told them that he was a " comrade " ; he had encouraged them to fight Nazism, assuring them of his own democratic sentiments and of the moral support of all decent and right-thinking men. They had acted on those promises and those hopes. They had done what they could—not all of them, of course, for no movement is perfect. For their weaknesses of character and errors of judgment they had paid frightful penalties and would pay more. The weaklings had dropped out, and a little group, perhaps a mere handful, was carrying on the fight, trying to keep the spark alive, to save the soul of the future.

Frudi hadn't told Lanny what they were doing. She had assumed that there was no need to do so. Lanny had been in the movement for years and had known some of its great leaders. She and Ludi had poured out their hearts to him and Freddi ; they had set forth their ideas in detail, and Lanny had agreed with them. He had said to himself : " Here are two people who understand not merely the economic forces which move society, but the moral forces which move the souls of men." That combination of understanding was rare, and these four young idealists, three men and one woman, had merged their souls and their labours. They had forged weapons for the future—and now it appeared that only two of them were left alive to put the weapons to use.

Lanny didn't have to guess what was going on, for the underground movement against Hitler had been pretty well written up in the neighbouring lands ; even the capitalist press had now and then printed news of it. There was a " flash-sender," as the Germans call it, a secret radio transmitter, hidden somewhere in the country, and every now and then it would start up, revealing forbidden news, exposing official falsehoods, tormenting the Nazis with jeering comments. If it had stayed in one place, it could have been quickly located, but it kept moving ; it must be carried in a van or covered

car, and the powers of the Gestapo had been set to hunting it—so far without success.

Also there were secret printing-presses ; leaflets were printed or mimeographed, and would be found on the benches of workers when they came in the morning, or perhaps in their dinner-pails at noon. Very often it would be the Socialists attacking the Communists, or vice versa—they still kept up their factional disputes, even in the concentration camps. But Lanny could be sure that Trudi was not taking any part in that, because she had agreed with him in deploring the blunder. She would be exposing the fraudulent Socialism of the Nazis and pointing out to the workers how they were being led into the path of war.

These heroic people were depending upon Lanny for their funds. He knew enough about left-wing movements to understand that they would have dropped efforts to get funds elsewhere and be devoting themselves to spending what he sent them. And now their supply would stop. There would be no way for him to notify them not to expect more ; they would wait and go on waiting—in the same unhappy state of mind which he had known in Berlin, waiting for word from Trudi. The flash-sender would fall silent because they had no money for new batteries or petrol for the car ; the leaflets would no longer be distributed because there was no paper. Trudi might write to him—or more likely, she would give him up in disgust, and he would never hear from her again, never know whether she was alive or dead. But he, the young lord of Shore Acres, would be safe and comfortable, and if there was anything in the world that money could buy, he could have it for the asking. Everything save his peace of mind !

IX

He had managed to find purchasers for a couple more of Göring's paintings ; and after a week or two of wrestling within himself he said to his wife : " How would you like to take another run over to Berlin ? " He would have preferred to go alone, but tact required that he invite her.

As it happened, Irma had just received a letter from Margy, the very sporty Dowager Lady Eversham-Watson. Being nearly sixty, she ought to have known that she was " on the shelf," but she refused to. With the proceeds of the rapidly reviving business of whisky-distilling she had got herself a yacht, and instead of being content to invite Beauty and Sophie and other ladies of her own age she craved the society of the young. So, wouldn't Irma and Lanny be her guests

for the regatta week at Cowes? It was a great show, which Lanny had seen but Irma hadn't. Irma said: "Poor old Margy's a bore, but I imagine it will be rather swank—what do you think?"

What Lanny thought was: "O.K., let's go!" And so began one of those periods of agreeable confusion in which you make plans and decisions. They would leave Frances here with her grandmother, for they were coming back, having accepted an invitation for a couple of weeks' hunting on one of the estates of the South Carolina tidelands. Irma would take her maid, because you couldn't participate in regatta festivities without a personal maid. But not too many clothes, because they would have several days in London to get yachting-togs. Lanny would look kind of cute in such an outfit; his wife would order one and order him to have it fitted. As a reward for his being so sweet, she would accompany him to Berlin and let him look at pictures for as long as he needed.

They had to choose a steamer, and engage accommodations, and send cablegrams to friends. Lanny called his father and told him; he called Johannes, and found that he had just had a cablegram from Hansi and Bess. The two musicians had left South America for a tour round the world and had got as far as Japan. Now they had learned of a Congress of the Comintern to be held in Moscow, the first in seven years, and they were leaving by way of Vladivostok to take in this show.

Lanny, too, had heard about this coming event. The Third International had summoned its parties all over the world to send delegates, to consult concerning the new emergency which confronted them in the upsurge of Fascism-Nazism. Rumour had it that a change in the party line was contemplated; some sort of united front was to be set up with the Socialists and other liberal forces. This was what Lanny had been urging for many years; he could say that the Comintern was about to adopt his party line! Having attended a dozen conferences of "bourgeois" statesmen, he would have greatly enjoyed attending one of revolutionists. But, alas, nobody could go from the Kremlin to Karinhall, or from Karinhall to the Kremlin! He said to Irma: "We'll meet Hansi and Bess when they come out, and hear all about it."

Irma said: "You can!"

X

Early one morning a procession set out from Shore Acres: two cars and a station-wagon, the first with Irma, driven by her husband, with their five-year-old darling between them, and Miss Addington,

the elderly English governess, in the back seat ; in the second car, Mrs. Barnes and Uncle Horace, driven by their chauffeur, and with one of their favoured pensioners beside him. In the station-wagon rode Céleste, Irma's Breton maid, and a load of trunks. They drove to the pier where the great Cunard liner was already rumbling her whistle. Lanny's car had steel chains put under it and was lifted into the hold ; the trunks were piled into a heavy rope net and thus let down into another hold ; the three passengers and their guests went up by the gangplank, preceded by stewards carrying armfuls of their bags. Moving the rich about the world is a task involving a lot of labour for other people, but the rich themselves maintain a calm and unhurried aspect. "The sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have inherited that good part."

To go away is to die a little, the French say ; but the sons and daughters of Mary do their dying in private, and in this case only little Frances shed any tears. She liked steamships and wanted to go along. When the call came : "All ashore that's going ashore !" she wanted violently to remain, and it wasn't complimentary to her grandmother and her great-uncle. Irma had to promise to throw her a red paper ribbon, and for that she went eagerly.

This pleasant custom had grown up in recent years. The steamship people furnished rolls of thin paper ribbon of bright colours ; the passenger held one end and tossed the roll to a friend on the pier, and he or she caught it, and so they were connected by symbolical bonds until the vessel began to move and all ties were severed. Irma tossed a red one, and it was caught and handed to the twenty-three-million-dollar child. Lanny tossed a blue one, and she wanted that also, and stood with a ribbon in each fist, carrying on with both parents a conversation of which they heard no word. However, she heard her father's voice : "I'll be back soon !"

Lanny said this because it was the proper thing ; but inside him a voice whispered : "*Oh, yeah ?*" This voice had taken to speaking at intervals by day and night, and was pretty well spoiling Lanny's enjoyment of the agreeable life which fate had assigned him. Irma noticed it, and would say : "What makes you so glum, Lanny ?" He would answer : "I'm just thinking." Irma was thinking, too, and guessing that her strange husband wasn't entirely cured of his Pink vice, and was brooding because the world didn't behave according to his formulas.

Pressing against Lanny's chest on his right side was a wad which he had wrapped in a handkerchief and kept pinned in his inside coat pocket. It contained a large number of hundred-mark notes, which he had acquired by visiting different money-changing agencies in

New York, using care to attract no attention. One of the results of his meditations on the problem of what might be happening in Berlin : he had decided that he had taken a serious chance by going to his regular bank, drawing out a large sum, and passing it on to Trudi Schultz. Doubtless the bank had kept a record of the serial numbers of those notes. In Naziland, a record was kept of everything ; the hairs of your head were numbered, and if too many sparrows fell to the ground in your garden the fact would be reported to the *Polizei*. Suppose one or more of those notes had been found on Comrade Monck or some other arrested person and the source of the funds had been traced ! This was just one of a great number of imaginations which were trying to ruin a yachting-regatta for Lanny Budd.

II

Farewell to Every Fear

IN THE month of August the weather man is apt to be less unfriendly to the English, which is perhaps why the Cowes regatta is held at the beginning of that month. Yachtsmen and yacht lovers assemble from all the shores of Britain and indeed of the Atlantic ; the Solent is crowded with vessels large and small, both steam and sail. Everything is new and shiny ; white sails, white paint, and spit-and-polish brass ; the sea green, or blue-green, with whitecaps when it breaks ; the sky a light blue, and the clouds like wind-filled sails. Everybody puts on nautical clothes and a holiday air, and nowhere on the scene is there the slightest sign of what the English hymn-book refers to as sorrow, toil, and woe.

This was the jubilee year of the event, so there were jubilee cups offered by King George for the best records for yachts of various classes. There were several races each day, of various lengths, round certain buoys and lights outside the harbour ; sight-seeing vessels trooped out in the morning to follow the contenders, keeping politely off the course, shepherded by guard vessels with little flags to mark their authority and officials with megaphones to warn the careless. You stood by the rail, conscious of your sea-costume and also of your sea-legs, and watched the contenders through bino-

culars which made it almost as if you were on board. If you were an old-timer you displayed knowledge of the vessels and their owners, and the records which they and their predecessors had established. You knew the "corrected times," and even knew who had designed the various boats. It was a classic example of what Veblen calls "the conspicuous consumption of goods"; the frail craft were built for one purpose, to carry the utmost amount of sail and slide through the water at the utmost speed; they cost thumping sums and in a couple of years were obsolete because some other designer had gone one better. Therefore, when you joined a yachting crowd you were telling the world that you were on top financially and had been for some time.

Late in the day you came back into the harbour of your boat club, sunburned and with salt in your eyebrows. You bathed and dressed in evening clothes and perhaps went ashore for dinner and dancing, or were invited to some other yacht, or had friends invited to yours. All talked about the day's events, paid off their bets, and made new ones. In the first three days of this regatta the winds were feather-light, and that favoured the English yachts; in the last three days there were "spanking" breezes, which favoured the American, which had to be a shade more substantial in order to cross the ocean. So there was plenty about which to wager and to work up patriotic excitement. Margy Petries, proprietor of "Petries' Peerless," wasn't sure whether she favoured the vessel called *Yankee*; remembering she was also a dowager countess, she would consider "hedging" on her bets.

There are always some bridge fiends who cannot pass an evening without their rubber or two, and these would retire to the saloon. The young people would bring out gramophones and dance on deck. The vessels were closely crowded in their yacht-basins, and motor-boats were chugging this way and that; but English decorum prevailed even over the waters, and you danced to your own music, and enjoyed knowing that you were socially impeccable. King George went on board the *Yankee* for dinner, the second time that had happened in the history of Cowes, and it was "Hands across the Sea," an admission that Britain was preparing to share her rule. Irma was so impressed that she said: "Lanny, don't you think it would be fun to build one of these yachts and learn to sail it?" She was always thinking about some gadget that might capture her husband's fancy, and the more expensive it was the better, because, after all, if you could do things that nobody else could, weren't they the things to do?

II

Among the guests was what Margy called the "old crowd," including Beauty and her husband, and Sophie and her new husband—she might, according to the European custom, have kept her title though divorced and remarried, but she said that America was good enough for her, and this was considered a radical, almost revolutionary action. Also there came an old friend, Edna Fitz-Laing, of whose marital scandal Lanny had been an eye-witness in his boyhood. Now her lame English officer was dead, and she was a widow, rather poor, so Margy was being kind to invite her as well as a couple of elderly bachelors who might be attracted by her remnants of beauty. Two of them, with the idea that each might be jealous of the other!

There were enough bridge-players, and Lanny could sit on deck in the evening and chat with Rick. The baronet's son and his wife were here because Margy knew this would please Lanny and cause him to bring his heiress to Margy's affairs. That is the way to keep in the swim and build yourself into a social personality; by understanding your fellow-humans, their prejudices and desires; by learning how to mix them and make them have a good time.

Lanny and Rick, a pair of social philosophers mature beyond their years, reclined on deck chairs and gazed at the golden stars in the clear sky, thinking of their distance, and how insignificant were the two-legged creatures dressing themselves up and strutting on a very small planet. How long the stars had been there, and how short a time was allotted to the creatures—and what were they doing with it? The newspapers came from the city, and you could study the details of their activities, at least those which the press lords considered fit for your perusal. Both the art expert and the lame ex-aviator were students of this press, and had learned to read between the lines and draw conclusions different from what the vendors intended.

Mussolini was admitting having sent more than a quarter of a million troops to Eritrea, his jumping-off place into the land of the Negus, known also as the Lion of Judah and King of Kings; the ardent young Fascists were singing a song—you could get the lilt of it even in English: "Of the whiskers of the Negus we will make a little brush to polish off the boots of Mussolini!" Their hero now had a million of them under arms, and while the lovely yachts were gliding over the blue waters of the Solent he mobilized three more divisions. The League was continuing the farce of pretending to mediate between the black whiskers and the prognathous jaw, but

they couldn't get anywhere because the two Italian members of the arbitration board refused to join the two Abyssinian members in naming a fifth. It was plain to all the world that Mussolini was merely stalling until the end of the rainy season, a couple of months off.

In the Geneva debates the Italians were having the ardent support of their friend the innkeeper's son from Auvergne who was now Premier of France. In that land of revolutionary traditions the class war was being waged merrily; there were strikes in the arsenals, accompanied by violence; with the secret backing of Pierre Laval the Croix de Feu was practising what it called "lightning mobilizations," also the conversion to military purposes of the aeroplanes owned by its wealthy members. "I no longer care a hang for legality," said Colonel de la Roque, its founder, and Lanny had been to their meetings and could imagine the yells with which his followers would greet this declaration.

The American could tell about conditions in New York; how rapidly the Nazis were organizing, with many large camps where they drilled. Just before his sailing they had held a meeting in Yorkville, the German quarter of the city, in which their uniformed guards had worn revolvers. The steamers of the German lines which came to the port brought loads of Nazi propaganda which was mailed out to their "Bund" headquarters all over the land. This had provoked a fury of indignation among the anti-Nazis, and they had mobbed the steamer *Bremen* at its sailing a week before Lanny's own departure.

III

Over in Moscow the sessions of the Comintern were under way, and on the third day of the Cowes regatta, while the wind was light and the *Enterprise* was winning the forty-mile race for the big Class J yachts, the Bulgarian delegate Dimitroff made a fiery speech announcing plans for the "united front" against Fascism all over the world. This was the man whom Lanny had heard defending his life against the fat General Göring at the Reichstag fire trials less than two years ago. He had sought refuge in the Soviet Union, and now the Nazis agreed that they had made a mistake, and that in future such men would be silenced at once and for ever.

On the day when the wind freshened and the *Yankee* won, the co-ordinated press of Naziland burst forth in furious onslaughts against the Comintern, calling upon the friends of order throughout the world to join with the Führer in destroying this vipers' nest.

On the last day of the regatta the American Earl Browder called upon the Communists to broaden their appeal, so as to win the farmers and workers and middle-class elements of his country. From the American press came indignant protests to the effect that Moscow was breaking the promise it had made as the price of American recognition, not to make Communist propaganda in the United States. To this Moscow had its answer: Moscow had nothing to do with what the Comintern did, the Comintern was an independent assemblage of delegates from all the countries of the world.

When you confronted a diplomatic evasion such as that, what were you going to call it, a lie or a fib? And was it your programme to repudiate and expose all lies and fibs? If so, you would have a busy life, for the world was lining up on opposite sides of a revolutionary struggle, and who in all history had ever waged war without falsehoods? Certainly not anyone who had won his war! Didn't every nation try to deceive its enemies as to its plans? Didn't every nation send spies into the enemy nations and wasn't deception the essence of their job? Above all, who was Lanny Budd to raise this issue, being now on his way into Germany to do a fancy job of lying?

The gravest of moral problems confronted a social being in these unhappy times. For when you let down the bars and admitted the right to lie and to cheat, you were undermining the very bases upon which human societies are built. Particularly when you admitted the right of political parties to lie and cheat, for how, then, could anybody have faith in them? How could their own followers know what they were or what they would become? And yet, here in old Europe you didn't have any ideal government to pin your hopes to; you had a number of far from perfect governments and had to choose the least objectionable. If you took your stand on what you called fundamental moral principles, it was like retiring to a mountain top, away from all human affairs; you could live there like a hermit, or a Hindu mystic, gazing at your own navel—until the guns started shelling your mountain top, and the bombing-planes took it for an objective!

IV

On Sunday morning the American couple motored to Wickthorpe Castle to spend the day and night. This was important for Lanny, because he met Gerald Albany and others of the government set and heard them discussing the problems of that very dangerous

hour; if he met Göring he would be able to repeat what they had said, of course withholding anything that was really confidential. He played no favourites, but told his English friends about his last meeting with the fat Commander of the German Air Force and what that loquacious personage had revealed about the wonderful new fighter planes he was building, the many skilled pilots he was training, and how they were going to knock all enemy planes out of the air in the first hours of a war. Alas, this didn't do much harm to Göring, because Ceddy and his friends were serenely certain that the fat General was bluffing, trying to plant fear in their hearts against the day when Hitler would be ready to militarize the Rhineland, or whatever his next move might be.

Irma knew no reason for being in a hurry, so on Monday they drove to London and she did some shopping and had her hair waved and enjoyed a leisurely tea with one of her women friends, while Lanny did his professional duty by looking at the offerings of the various picture dealers. In the evening they went to see a comedy which had been running all summer, called *Tovarisch*. It had to do with a Russian grand duke and his wife who were refugees in Paris, living in destitution because they wouldn't touch a huge sum which the duke held in trust in a Paris bank for his no-longer-existent government. It was reported that Herr Hitler had greatly enjoyed this play—after having taken the precaution to ascertain that its author was a pure Aryan!

Among great numbers of refugee "Whites" in Paris and on the Riviera, Lanny Budd had never met any who resembled these romantic figures. When at the end the grand duke's patriotic feelings caused him to turn the money over to the Soviet government, Lanny enjoyed the "happy ending" to a fairy tale. In the next morning's papers, he read news of the Comintern Congress, also editorials of embittered loathing in the London press—but nothing either humorous or romantic. Old Europe was a kettle full of seething hatreds, and the only question was, at what moment would it boil over and in which direction would the scalding stream flow?

There came a letter from Irma's friend the Fürstin Donnerstein, who was spending the hot season in a chalet on the Obersalzberg, near the Austrian border. She called it "little," but you could be sure there would be a number of guest rooms. "Do come and see it," she pleaded. "Berlin is absolutely impossible in August. From our upstairs veranda you can see the Berghof, the eagle's eyrie where our great Führer hides, and perhaps Lanny will take you to visit him." She had heard of the playboy's having had

this great honour, one which neither she nor her husband had ever enjoyed.

"How about it?" asked Irma; and Lanny responded: "Would you really like to meet Hitler?" She said it might be amusing, and certainly it would be an adventure to tell her friends about. Lanny thought: "Whatever I can get Adi to reveal about his plans will be of use to Rick, and to Blum and Longuet, and Raoul Balma, perhaps even to Trudi. Certainly they'll take it more seriously if I get it from the horse's mouth."

To his wife he said: "I'll ask Heinrich Jung about it when we get to Berlin." He hadn't been to see his oldest Nazi friend on recent trips, partly because Lanny himself had been too busy, and partly because Irma found Heinrich and his wife such bores. That was the one thing which the daughter of J. Paramount Barnes refused to endure, and Lanny planned to take advantage of that trait in Berlin. He would have to get away from Irma in order to see Trudi, and it might not be so easy when all her friends were out of town. But if he went to see Heinrich at the latter's office, and if this fanatical enthusiast took him to see some Hitler Youth demonstration, or school, or recreation centre—those were things which would move Irma to remark: "I'll go to a picture show by myself!"

There wasn't any need to telegraph reservations to the Adlon in the midst of summer heat, but Lanny did so and specified the hour of his arrival. He didn't have to mention that he wanted the reporters to be on hand, for every leisure-class hotel seeks publicity and takes it for granted that all patrons do the same. So when the American party arrived, the press was in the lobby, watching respectfully a procession composed of one heiress, one prince consort, one maid, and three bellboys loaded with four suitcases apiece.

Seated in the drawing-room of their suite, Lanny ordered drinks for the reporters and told them about the Cowes regatta, the art treasures he meant to purchase, and the visit he purposed in the neighbourhood of the Führer's retreat. Every Berlin newspaper had accounts of Lanny's last interview with the nation's idol, and this made it certain that he would get space in the morning. "Kornmahler" would see these items, and there should be a letter very soon.

Lanny figured that it might arrive by mid-afternoon; and

meanwhile he would be the most attentive of husbands, so as to excuse himself for later neglect. The weather was warm and sultry, and he said: "How would you like to drive to one of the lakes and have a swim?" In that flat province of Brandenburg, once a swampy forest inhabited by aurochs, bears, and barbarians, were lakes enough for all the population of a metropolis to sail on and swim in. But on a week-day morning nearly all that population was at work, and visiting Americans could have boat-houses and bathing-pavilions to themselves. The hotel porter would tell them where to find the most exclusive, and they could pass a pleasant morning and afterwards have lunch. Irma wouldn't stop to wonder what they were waiting for, because she had all the time there was in her life.

When they got back to the hotel, there was the expected note, the briefest possible: "I have some sketches which I hope you will like. I would be pleased if you come at twenty-two o'clock any evening that is convenient to you." That was all. Trudi had never before asked him to come at night, and he guessed that it was because she no longer dared to appear on the streets by daylight.

Lanny's first thought was how to get away from Irma at ten o'clock in the evening. But the fates were more than kind to him; there came a telephone call from the Frau Ritter von Fiebewitz, who happened to be in town, on her way from the mountains to the seashore; wouldn't they come and have supper with her—an impromptu affair, since she had only one servant with her?—Irma wanted to go, and Lanny said: "I'll tell you what: I'll take you there and leave you, and then I'll take Heinrich to dinner and save you the boredom. If you're not present, he won't expect his wife to be invited. I'll drive him home afterwards, and your friend can bring you to the hotel, no doubt."

"Or I can take a taxi," said the young wife amiably. It had worked out like a bit of magic.

VI

The son of the head forester of Stubendorf had risen to high rank in that branch of the party machine which had charge of the education and training of the Führer's youth; but Heinrich Jung still saw Lanny Budd as the darling of fortune who had come visiting, spreading an aura of elegance, chatting airily about the great ones of Europe's capitals. The National Socialists considered themselves revolutionists and destroyers of Europe's old

culture, but only the crudest and most fanatical had freed themselves entirely from its spell; thus to his Nazi friend Lanny was still a romantic figure, received as a guest at Schloss Stubendorf and recognized by the *gleichgeschaltete Presse* of Berlin. Before Heinrich came to the Adlon to dine, he took the trouble to hurry home and put on his dress-uniform, much too warm and smelling strongly of moth-balls. When he met his brilliant friend his blue Nordic eyes shone with happiness and his rosy Nordic cheeks which had grown plumper with the years acquired two naïve and quite charming dimples.

"*Ach, Lanny!*" he exclaimed. "When are you going to come out for us?"

"What do you want me to do?" smiled the host. "Put on a uniform?"

"*Warum nicht?* It would become you, and you would have a distinguished career. In no time at all you could become the *Gauleiter* of New England. Our people over there are not doing so very well."

"All my friends in New England think I am a foreigner," replied Lanny. "They would not follow my lead."

He asked what Heinrich was doing at present, and, as always, this started a flood. The Nazi official had been on the point of calling up, to beg Lanny to come with him on the morrow to Nürnberg. There was a Nationalist Socialist school for selected young men who had been brought from all the nations of the earth—fifteen hundred students chosen for their special aptitudes from fifty-one different lands; they were the future national *Führers* and world masters. Heinrich had been chosen to lecture them about the *Hitlerjugend* and how this marvellous organization had been built during the past decade. The term of the school was closing, and there would be impressive ceremonies, including memorial services in front of the War Monument: flags and banners, drums and trumpets, martial hymns, all that ritual which thrilled the soul of a pure Nordic *Herrenmensch*. "Lanny, you wouldn't be able to resist it!"

"Perhaps that is why I don't go," replied the irreverent American. "I couldn't settle down and work as hard as you, Heinrich; but I admire you for it, all the same." The cheeks of the head forester's son glowed with pleasure, and Lanny signed to the waiter to fill up his glass. The lavish host had ordered a litre of the best French champagne and would see that his friend drank the greater part of it.

"As a matter of fact I'm really busy right now," the host

continued. "I am selling some of Minister-Präsident General Göring's paintings for him. He has rather extraordinary taste, you know, and I find it instructive as well as profitable to co-operate with him." Lanny talked with easy familiarity about Karin hall, and Emmy, and the wonderful wedding-gifts, and the fat General's skill as a hunter of wild boars—taking the hunter's word for it. Since Lanny's visit to the preserve, official announcement had been made of the film star's intention to retire and present the German people with an heir, and this stirred in Heinrich that philoprogenitive instinct which characterizes a *Herrenvolk* on its way to power and glory.

All through dinner the American listened to good Nazi propaganda; then he took his friend up to the suite, where they had coffee and brandy, and Heinrich talked about the sad fate of his one-time friend Hugo Behr and others who had been so tragically misled as to oppose the Führer's will. The international situation now showed how right the Führer had been; how Germany's freedom could be won by boldness and in no other way. Heinrich quoted a speech recently made by General Göring to the effect that he wanted and would have "no dish-water internationalism" in the Fatherland. Lanny, who had pleaded at the Paris Peace Conference against the cutting off of Stubendorf from the German Republic, was taken by the young official to be in complete sympathy with anything the Führer saw fit to do; so the listener had only to go on listening.

VII

Presently there was a chance to change the subject. Lanny remarked: "Irma and I are planning to drive to Salzburg tomorrow, to visit a friend in the mountains there. I wish we could drive you as far as Nürnberg, Heinrich, but Irma has her maid along, and with all the bags she's about buried."

"Oh, that's all right," replied the other. "There's a party car going with three of us."

"This occurred to me," continued the other. "It might be good form for us to drop in and pay our respects to the Führer, if you think he would like it."

"Oh, Lanny, I'm sure he would! I wish I could go, too; but you know how it is—I cannot neglect an important duty to our youth."

"Of course not. What would you advise me to do? Would you like to phone and find out if he would care to receive us?"

"Gewiss, if you wish it."

"Well, why not put in a call from here?" Heinrich was greatly excited by this honour, and Lanny knew the hotel staff would be the same; he guessed that before the call had been completed the whole of the immense establishment would know what was going on.

Heinrich spoke the portentous words with proud distinctness: "*Hallo. Heil Hitler! Bitte, des Führers Heim, Der Berghof, in Berchtesgaden, Obersalzberg.*" After that he could hardly sit still in his chair, and could talk about nothing but, should he ask to speak to the greatest of men personally, and would the greatest come? Lanny, who had had much to do with the great, advised that the proper procedure was to ask for the Führer's secretary; there was pretty sure to be one on duty at all times. Avoid attempting to give an important message to butlers or maids, who lack familiarity with the outside world and may get names wrong, especially foreign names. Lanny knew that Heinrich's own name was one of power, because in his youth he had twice visited Adi in prison and that was something the ex-painter of picture postcards would never forget.

The phone rang and Heinrich picked up the receiver with a trembling hand. Lanny listened to the conversation: "*Hallo. Ist dort Der Berghof? Heil Hitler. Hier Heinrich Jung. Wollen Sie mich bitte mit dem Sekretär des Führers verbinden? Ja? Danke schön.*" A wait, and then: "*Sekretär des Führers? Heil Hitler. Hier spricht Heinrich Jung, Gruppenführerstellvertreter des fünften Gaus der Reichsjugendführung und ein alter Freund des Führers. Heil Hitler.*"

So much for preliminaries, and Heinrich went on to explain that the American, Lanny Budd and his multi-millionaire wife—Heinrich hadn't had to be told to mention this—were motoring to the vicinity of the Berghof, and Herr Budd, who had already twice met the Führer, desired to call with his wife and pay their respects. Again there was a wait, longer this time, and at last a beaming smile exploded upon the round Aryan features of the Hitler Youth official. "*Ja, ja! Bitte, einen Augenblick.*"

He turned to Lanny. "The Führer will see you to-morrow evening at twenty-two o'clock. Can you be there?"

"Sure, I'll be there." Since Lanny didn't intend to load himself up with the pictures until he was ready to leave Germany, he had nothing to do but see Trudi this evening, and could start early next morning. He wasn't surprised by the lateness of the appointment, knowing that Adi suffered from insomnia and kept late hours.

Of course he didn't fail to thank his old friend for this honour. Few persons in the Fatherland could have done this, he said, and added that he and his wife would be careful not to say a word which would trouble the great man, who sought this retreat in the high mountains to commune with his soul and escape from the cares of state.

It was then a little after nine o'clock, or twenty-one continental. Lanny said he had an engagement to meet his wife, and hoped that Heinrich wouldn't mind being sent home in a taxi-cab. The head forester's son said he hadn't got that important yet, so Lanny escorted him downstairs—flushed in the cheeks and extremely talkative with mixed liquors—and put him into a car, paying the driver twice what the fare could amount to. "*Heil Hitler für dich und grüss Gott für die Frau !*" said Lanny, knowing that his friend's plump little spouse came from Bavaria.

VIII

Lanny got his car and drove, and promptly on the stroke of twenty-two—a great many strokes to count—he was at the corner where for the past eight months or so he had been meeting his fellow-conspirator. His heart was in his throat; for suppose she didn't come, or—just supposing!—there should come in her stead one of the armoured cars of the Gestapo, accompanied by a couple of fast-driving motor-cyclists with side-arms!

But no, here she was! Wearing a hat with a wide brim, which shaded her features from the street lights and the moon; walking fast, and looking neither to right nor to left. Lanny drew up to the kerb not far ahead, and she sprang in quickly, saying: "Drive!" His high-powered car started away, and he asked: "Is anybody following you?"

Her answer was: "They have been following me everywhere." He turned a corner, and watched for car lights behind him or for a car without lights. After several turns he was sure they were safe for the time being, and said: "You can rest for a while; nobody is going to pay any attention to you in this car."

"Oh, Lanny!" she exclaimed. "I have been having the most dreadful time ever since I saw you last. I've hardly had a day of peace. The police got on our trail, and they have taken most of my friends. It is too horrible to talk about or even to think about."

"You had better tell me a little," he said gently. "After all, I am in it too, you know."

"That is one of the things that have made me sick. I waited a couple of months, trying to make up my mind whether I ought to bring you back into Germany again."

"All the Nazis appear glad to see me. I have an appointment to call on the Führer at Berchtesgaden to-morrow evening."

"*Herrgott, Lanny!* You might kill him!"

"Would you advise me to?" He thought it worth while to make sure.

"I didn't mean that. I mean, they wouldn't let you near him if they had any suspicion of you."

"I have been consoling myself with that idea. I don't suppose he wants the pleasure of torturing me personally. Tell me what you have been doing, so that I can advise you."

"We were getting out an underground paper—fifty thousand copies of a tiny four-page weekly, with the real news. They got our press and our printer, and two of our key men who were doing the distributing."

"So you've had to quit?"

"For the present. I am afraid to go about, because they have my picture on a sheet which they distribute. Twice they have arrested the people with whom I have been staying, and that is the most awful thing to me; I don't know what to do—I give the kiss of death wherever I go."

"Trudi," he said gravely, "how much do you really know about Monck?"

"Oh, Lanny, you mean that you suspect him? He has been one of our most devoted comrades; he's a marine engineer, a skilled man, and he has worked in the party since he was a youth."

"How did it happen that the Nazis spared him until just recently?"

"He went underground, as we all have done. Believe me, I thought long and hard over the right man to send to you. It is easier for a seaman to go abroad than for a woman. I am sure he would have betrayed you at once if he had meant to. The Gestapo doesn't wait to strike, and they would never have let you come into Germany and distribute large sums of money if they had any hint of it."

"Do you know anybody known to Monck who is still at large and working for the cause?"

She thought for a while. "Yes, I do; at least I think I do. You can never be sure from hour to hour. That is the most trying thing about the life we live. You go to a friend's room, thinking to find shelter for the night, and you are afraid to tap on the door,

because it may be opened by a man in uniform. No use trying to run; he will shoot you in the feet. That leaves you still able to talk."

"Well, Trudi," he said, "I don't know what to advise. If you can't function any longer, I'm ready to help you get out."

"Oh, I can't desert the comrades! So many of them, in such dreadful trouble! We all pledged ourselves to carry on."

"Yes; but it's possible to edit and print a paper in France or in Holland and to smuggle copies in. I might be able to help you with that and still keep my part a secret, so that I could continue to earn money."

"It is something to think about; but I am staying with a family now whose head is an old printer, and he thinks he can find a way to buy a hand-press, so that we can go on."

"All right," he answered; "if that is what you want, here's five thousand marks. I took the precaution to buy them in New York, and some in London, so I don't think they can be traced." He had hidden the precious wad in his car while entering Germany, and on the way to this rendezvous he had dug it out. Now he put it into her hands.

"I don't know if I ought to take it," she countered. "I'm not sure if I can use it to advantage, the way I'm having to live now."

"Forget it," he replied. "You have to live in any case, and so do your friends. What can I do better with Göring's money?"

IX

Meetings with Trudi Schultz were few and costly. Lanny didn't expect to see her again on this trip, so he had tried to think of all the questions he had to ask and the arrangements he had to make. He didn't ask for details of her work or the names of those who had been seized by the Nazis. He remembered many whom he had met in the old days, and was curious as to their fates, but he left them in the shadows. She asked whether his wife had any idea of his activities, and he said he didn't think so. He defended Irma as well as he could; she was what her environment had made her, and she was still young. He told his fellow-conspirator that he was expecting to return to New York, and gave her his address there. Also they agreed upon certain code words, the names of painters, so that she could tell him if she needed a printing-press, or paper, or whatever it might be. Lanny had once brought a van-load of Marcel's works into Germany for exhibition, and he

could repeat that stunt if necessary, concealing quite a quantity of goods under a hundred paintings !

Finally she said : " I'm afraid to travel in the subway, and I had to walk a long distance here, so I'll let you set me down in the Schöneberg district, where I am living now."

He drove according to her directions, and when she was ready to be set down, he said : " You know, I'm not curious about where you're living, but I hate to put you down at random, not knowing how things may be. Can't I drive you through your block and let you have a look ? Then I'll drive round the block a couple of times so that if you find anything has gone wrong you can come out and join me."

She told him the block, one of scores all alike, as in modern capitals. Scarcely had they driven into it when she caught his arm and whispered : " There are two cars in front of the house ! Turn round ! "

He saw the cars, facing his way, and knew they could start and catch up with him while he was backing and turning in a not very wide street. " Sit still ! " he commanded. " Sink down in the seat ! Lay your head on my shoulder ! " He sat forward slightly, so as to hide her face but not the fact that she was there.

In this position they drove past the two cars. At the wheel of each Lanny saw that most dreadful of sights, the Schutzstaffel uniform, steel helmet, and black shirt with armband containing the skull and crossbones. One glimpse was enough, and after that he drove with eyes straight ahead, not altering his speed. It was his guess that a man with a fancy foreign-made car, driving a young woman on a summer's night, would not arouse special interest in the Gestapo. When he got farther down the street and saw in his little mirror the cars remaining where they were, he hit it up and turned the next corner, and got quickly out of the Schöneberg district of Berlin.

Trudi Schultz had sunk into a heap, shaken with sobs. At first he thought it was the reaction from her terror, but then he realized that she was not thinking about herself. " Oh, Lanny, those poor people ! They will be dragged away to some cellar by those devils and torn to pieces, to make them tell where I've gone."

" Do they know ? " asked the man, thinking about himself for once.

" *Nein, ausgeschlossen !* I told them I was going to interview a

man who can get us some paper without the police tracing it. But, Lanny, if you knew them! The most devoted comrades, workers who have toiled all their lives and put their pennings into party dues and literature! The man's face lined and hair turned grey too early, and the woman thin and harassed, with work-worn hands and forearms that seem to be nothing but whipcords. And two children—a half-grown boy and a girl—the S.S. will torture them, too. It does no good to say you don't know anything; they don't believe you, they go on whipping you senseless, they make your whole body one mass of raw wounds."

"I know," Lanny said. "I have seen it with my own eyes." He let her have another spell of weeping; after which he thought it was time to put her mind to work. "Listen, my dear. You know I have a date with Irma, and I can't go on driving all night."

"Yes, yes, I understand. I am imposing on you cruelly. Put me down any place."

"But where do you mean to go?"

"I haven't an idea. I can't think of another family that would dare to take me in—or that I would have the right to impose upon."

"Can't I take you somewhere out of town?"

"What good would it do? If I go to a hotel, or take lodgings, I have to register with the police within twenty-four hours, and I have to show my identification card, which I destroyed along ago. I am an outlaw."

"Well, my dear, you can't just go on walking about the streets; and you certainly must know that I wouldn't be happy driving off and leaving you."

She didn't know what to say; and after an interval he decided that the time for action had come. "Listen, Trudi," he said, "we have an old saying, that he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day. I'm going to take you out of Germany."

"How can you do it?" she asked.

"That is something that will require thinking. But first I want to know, will you come?"

There was a pause. "All right," she said at last, her voice low, as if it hurt.

"*Gut!*" he exclaimed. "The first thing, I have to tell my wife, because we shall need her help."

"Will she give it, Lanny?"

"She won't like it, of course; but it will not be possible for her to refuse."

"I don't want to come between you and her, Lanny."

"I don't think it will be as serious as that. She is a sensible

person, also kind-hearted. When she realizes the situation, she will not wish to throw you to the wolves."

"Will you tell her the whole story?"

"I must think about that. The first thing is to get you into the hotel."

"*Aber, Lanny!* You are dreaming of taking me into the Adlon?"

"You will be surprised what a difference it will make when you get some of Irma's clothes on. They'll be a bit large, but she will walk on one side of you and I on the other and I don't think anyone will pay any special attention."

"But if I'm to spend the night there, I'll have to register."

"You'll go in late, and you'll be leaving in the morning, and I doubt if they'll realize the situation before that."

"Lanny, I could get you into horrible trouble!"

"I doubt it, really. We're Americans, and we're well-known, and I don't believe the Nazis would want a scandal. I have a perfectly good story if it comes to a showdown: you are an artist and I am a *Kunstsachverständiger*; I helped to get your drawings published in France, and I gave you financial aid because I expected to sell your work and make money out of it. I had no idea of your illegal doings. By the way, you had better give me back that money until we get out of Germany. It'll be more natural for me to have it than you."

XI

Lanny parked the car boldly in front of the hotel. He had put Trudi in the rear seat, and told her to lie back so that her face was out of sight. If anyone spoke to her she would say that she was waiting for Herr Budd; but he doubted if anyone would speak, unless he left the car too long.

The keys to his suite were still at the desk, so Irma had not returned. That was convenient; he went to her room and threw into an empty suitcase a dress of dark-blue silk, not too conspicuous, a hat to match, and shoes and stockings. Whatever Trudi wore had to be complete; a pair of brown cotton stockings would have been as much an exposure as a red Socialist badge. He took the precaution to phone to Céleste, Irma's maid, who was in the hotel, telling her to go to bed, as her services would not be required that evening. Then he hurried down to the car and drove away. Trudi pulled down the side and rear curtains, and changed her clothes quickly. What to do with the old ones was a problem, suggestive

of a murder mystery. It wouldn't do to have them found in the hotel or in the car. After she had assured him that there were no marks of identification on her clothing, no papers in pockets, and no laundry marks, he told her to tie the whole lot into a tight ball, and when he was crossing the River Spree on one of the numerous bridges he tossed the bundle over the parapet.

Now Trudi Schultz was a lady, and a perfect one; but Lanny didn't want to escort her into the suite alone, nor did he wish her to witness the interview between himself and his wife. He parked near the hotel and left her as before. Irma still hadn't arrived, though it was after midnight; he assumed that she was enjoying a good gossip with the Frau Ritter von Fiebewitz, and he used the time to make a thorough search of her bedroom, under the rugs, inside the window curtains, under the bed, to make sure there was nothing resembling a wire or metal disc which might be part of a sound-transmitting device. He took the additional precaution to get a heavy bath towel and wrap the telephone in it. After that he was ready for the "big scene."

Irma had been having a good time, including, no doubt, a couple of cocktails; her cheeks were flushed and she was full of things to talk about. "Oh, Lanny, I'm sorry to be late, but I had such a curious adventure! Did you ever see a *Thingspiel*?"

"I have heard of them," he said.

"Fiebewitz's cousin came and took us out into the country somewhere, and we saw one, in a big open-air theatre. There must have been a thousand people, peasants and villagers, and really I felt I was in Germany for the first time in my life. The play was unbelievably crude, but they ate it up—the women were sobbing all around me. It made me think of an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* show I saw once when I was a girl—up in the Adirondacks. Fiebewitz says it is like the old miracle and mystery plays in England."

"What was it about?" Lanny had to be polite now, of all times.

"About Hitler and his saving the German people. It was called *German Passion 1933*, and it showed how Hitler took up the cross—really it was quite blasphemous, because it showed him instead of Christ being crucified by the Jews, and then he had a resurrection and ascended to heaven, and got instructions from an angel, and came back to earth in shining armour to save a lovely blue-eyed maiden with two long braids of flaxen hair; she was Germany, of course, and it sounds silly to tell it, but you can't imagine how deeply moved the audience was. I'm sure those country women all really believed the Führer had had exactly those experiences."

"Listen, dear," said Lanny quickly. "You'd better come in here if you want to talk about things like that." He drew her into the bedroom and shut the door, led her to a chair, drew up his own, and said: "Something serious has happened. Listen carefully, and please, whatever you think, don't raise your voice."

XII

So began the story of how Lanny had received a note from a young woman artist of talent, telling of her need for help, and how he had gone to meet her; what she had told him about her activities and the fate of her associates, and how he had driven her past her tenement home and what they had seen. It was the truth and nothing but the truth, but of course not the whole truth. He found that Irma didn't remember Trudi; the woman artist had been one of some two score persons she had met at a reception of the school, and had disapproved of. It was a perfectly consistent story, and while telling it he thought that he was getting away with it.

But when he stopped, he soon discovered that he wasn't! His young wife sat with her hands clenched tightly and her lips pressed together. "You see!" she exclaimed. "I can't trust you! You have got mixed up with that Red business again!"

"No, dear——"

"Don't try to fool me any longer, Lanny! You have been meeting that woman! Tell me the truth and stop treating me like a child."

"I have met her two or three times, and gave her some money—I couldn't very well refuse to help her, when I consider her a real artist——"

"Artist, my eye! You helped her because she's a Socialist, and you can't refuse anything those people ask of you. You've been coming into Germany on her account, and not for pictures. And now you've got yourself into another mess, the very thing you swore to me you wouldn't. You got me into Germany on that promise, and you were breaking it and meant to go on breaking it. What is that woman to you that you have to wreck our happiness for her sake?"

"Darling," he said, "let me make one thing clear at the start—there hasn't been the faintest hint of love between Trudi Schultz and me. I haven't so much as touched her hand. She is all wrapped up in the fate of her husband. She clings to the faith that he is still alive in some concentration camp, and that she is

helping him by the work she is doing. Please be sure of that, Irma."

There were tears in her eyes. "How little you understand me, Lanny! If you came to me and said you loved this woman, I'd be heart-broken, of course, but I wouldn't stand in the way of your happiness. If you told me that you had been making love to her, and that you realized it was a mistake and that you really loved me, I'd forgive you and try again to make you happy. That would be something I could understand, and if you said you were sorry I could believe you. But this Socialism business is something you aren't sorry about; you consider that it's right, and you mean to go on with it!" She paused; and when he was silent, she insisted: "Isn't that true?"

"Yes," he admitted, in a voice which implied that he was sorry about that. He was surprised by her point of view; impressed by its logic and at the same time shocked by the fierceness of prejudice it revealed.

"That's why I know I can never be happy with you again!" exclaimed the outraged wife.

"Listen, dear," he pleaded; "there is so much to be said on this subject——"

"No, Lanny, you are mistaken. It can all be said in a very few words."

"Don't say them now—please! Try to understand the situation. Trudi has no place in the world to go. The Nazis have seized the working people she was staying with—an elderly printer, a frail mother, and two half-grown children. The chances are a hundred to one that they have them in their dungeons at this moment and are torturing them to make them tell where Trudi is."

"Do they know where she is?"

"They do not."

"But you know?"

"She is sitting in our car in front of the hotel; and she can't sit there much longer without attracting attention. The entire police force of Berlin, the Brownshirts, the Schutzstaffel—the whole Nazi machine—have her picture and will be on the look-out for her."

"What is it you want me to do?"

"I want you to help her get out of Germany."

"Just a little simple thing like that!"

"You must remember, dear, this isn't a new problem to me. I faced it when I thought of getting Freddi out. I worked out many different plans."

"None of which was good enough!"

"I didn't have your help then."

"Suppose I refuse to help?"

"I'll have to do the best I can by myself. I'm surely not going to turn this woman out of our car and leave her on the streets to be picked up by those savages."

"And suppose I want the car to go home in?"

"Well then, I'll have the problem of buying another. Somehow I have to get her to the border. There are people who make money smuggling refugees out, and perhaps I can find them."

There was a long silence. He understood that a struggle was going on in her soul, and thought that she had better settle it for herself. Finally she said: "You have done something quite horrible to me, and something I can never forgive. But I don't want to see you killed, and I'm put in the position where I have to help this woman or run the risk of causing your death. If you can show me any chance of getting her out, I will do my part; but don't for a moment take it to mean that I am condoning what you have done."

"I am on my knees with gratitude, darling, and I will do all that a man can do to make it up to you."

"There is no way you can ever make it up to me, so don't deceive yourself with the idea. I have deceived myself long enough, and this time it's never again. I want to have it understood—I'm going to help, and publicly I'll do and say whatever is necessary; but apart from that I don't want to hear one word from her, and as few from you as possible. I don't mean to be disagreeable—I just want to avoid arguments, and to keep my thoughts to myself, and solve my own problems while you solve hers."

He thought it the part of wisdom to let matters rest right there.

12

Perilous Edge of Battle

SERENE and self-possessed, according to the code of the aloof classes, Irma Barnes and her prince consort strolled through the lobby of the Hotel Adlon and out to their parked car. Within sight of the august doorman the wife was introduced to her husband's

friend and shook hands with her, and then the three strolled back into the hotel, Lanny giving the car keys to the functionary so that one of the bellboys might take the car to the garage. The guests went up in the elevator to their suite, and when they were in Irma's bedroom, with the muffled telephone receiver, she delivered herself as follows :

"Miss Schultz, my husband has explained to me the unfortunate circumstances, and I have agreed to try to help you. We have decided to postpone conversation on all other subjects until that has been done. You will understand that I am doing it for my husband's sake, and not for that of a stranger; so do not waste any words in thanking me, but let us get down at once to the practical questions of how to proceed."

Trudi gulped once, and replied : "Frau Budd, your husband has not told me his plans, so all I can say is that I am prepared to do whatever you and he tell me. I am deeply sorry to have put you in this position."

"We cannot go backward, so there is no use discussing that." Irma turned to Lanny, who looked at her grimly set face and remembered the large and determined mother in Shore Acres who had tried so hard to prevent this unfortunate marriage; also the buccaneer of Wall Street whose black-moustached and frowning portrait confronted the household at the head of the grand staircase and still had power to intimidate. On Lanny's recent visit, rummaging in unexplored drawers of his deceased father-in-law's library, he had come upon a stack of handsomely printed pamphlets containing a speech which the manufacturer of public-utility pyramids had delivered to the United States Chamber of Commerce in banquet assembled. In it the man of great affairs had stated his opinion of "Socialist cranks and dreamers"—thus putting a prince consort in his place, just as Irma was now doing !

II

"We cannot leave to-night," declared the husband, in a low voice, "because we have no exit permits; also it would seem phony if we left Germany without putting through the picture deal for which we came. The first thing in the morning I will phone Oberleutnant Furtwaengler and explain that I have an appointment to call on the Führer in the evening; he will recognize the urgency, and will no doubt bring the paintings and the necessary papers at once. If we have our bill of sale with the signature of General

Göring's office, it may solve problems at the border—I proved that the last time I went out.”

“You mean that you expect to get through without either a passport or exit permit for Miss Schultz?”

“This is what I have in mind. We leave Céleste here at the hotel, stating that we are going to visit the Führer and then return. We take Trudi out with Céleste's exit permit, and we take her into Austria on Céleste's passport.”

“But there is Céleste's picture on the passport, and Miss Schultz does not look in the least like a Breton peasant.”

“It will be late at night, and Miss Schultz will be lying back in the rear seat, pretty well surrounded by paintings and bags. If any question is raised, I will say that she has been ill and has lost twenty pounds or so. I will also say that I am a friend of the Minister-Präsident General, and am handling these paintings for him; also that we have just come from a visit to the Führer, and that they may call the Berghof, which is only a couple of miles inside the border. I am sure those statements will turn the officials to jelly.”

“And then what do you expect to do about Céleste? Leave her in Germany the rest of her life?”

Lanny had worked over a problem like that more than two years ago, when he had been scheming to carry Freddi Robin out of Germany on the passport of a truck driver. He had told that story to Irma, but he didn't remind her of it now. He explained:

“Céleste will be staying safely in this hotel, going to picture shows and flirting with one of the male employees. She gets a letter from you saying that you were called home unexpectedly and that you forgot her papers and carried them out with you, and are now mailing them to her. You enclose money and tell her to join you in London or wherever you wish. Céleste waits, but the papers do not come, and when she telegraphs you to that effect you reply that they must have got lost in the mail. You tell her to go to the French consul and have the matter straightened out; you telegraph the French consul explaining the error and he will give her a new passport. All this may mean that you will have to have a substitute maid for a month or so.”

“You overlook one detail: there will be a record at the border where we go out, showing that Céleste's passport and exit permit were used there and that three persons went out.”

“In the first place, in wiring Céleste and the French consul, you will not say when or where you went out, but will state that we left Berlin hurriedly because we had an invitation to visit the

Führer, and you afterwards decided to come home at once. The consul will show that letter to the authorities, when he presents the new passport and gets the new exit permit. The authorities will hardly do much investigating in a case of the Führer's guests; at the worst it could not be a serious matter for Céleste, for it will be obvious that she is an ignorant person, a victim of her employers, and that she has no idea what has been done to her. Most probably she will never know just what happened to her; if she does, a small sum of money will salve her feelings. If possible, think up some errand for her to do to-morrow morning, so that she will not see Trudi and will have no idea that we have anyone with us."

Said Irma: "This may mean that you will never be able to come back into Germany."

"We can see how that works out," was the reply. "It is my guess that I can come into Germany any time I have a bank draft for a large sum payable to a certain fat gentleman."

III

Lanny gave up his bedroom to his guest, and slept on a couch in the drawing-room—since Irma did not invite him into her room. Lanny slept, because he knew he had to drive hard on the morrow, and he had grown to some extent accustomed to mix-ups with the Gestapo. Whether either of the ladies slept they did not tell him and he did not ask. In the morning his first act was to call the worshipful Oberleutnant, who, being a member of the fat General's household, was available early. As Lanny had foreseen, the young officer was overwhelmed by the news about the invitation to the Berghof, and undertook to get the paintings and the necessary papers and bring them personally to the Adlon.

Lanny removed all traces of his having slept in the drawing-room, and locked Trudi in the bedroom while breakfast was set on a couple of folding-tables; also while Irma summoned Céleste, who slept in the servants' quarters of the hotel. She came, sturdy peasant woman, always smiling, and of course, having no idea of the shabby trick being planned. She looked embarrassingly unlike Trudi Schultz; it was evident that no amount of illness or starvation would ever reduce those broad cheek-bones, or cause those features to assume the delicacy and fineness of a woman saint's. But Lanny was planning to blind the eyes of border officials, and he was interested to observe how even a French woman was thrilled by the news of the visit to the Führer.

The mistress explained that they were taking only two bags and had already put their things into these. She mentioned that her mother's birthday was approaching, and she had meant to send a gift; now she commissioned Céleste to visit the department stores and select something that was completely German and that Mrs. Barnes would appreciate, and send it by mail or express. Irma gave her a hundred-mark note, worth about forty dollars at this time, and sent her off contented and with no suspicion of anything wrong in the Budd family.

Lanny ordered his car and hurried to the Austrian consulate, where a modest *douleur* got him without delay the necessary visas upon the passports of himself, wife, and maid. When he got back to the hotel, the efficient Oberleutnant was on hand, and in one of the parlours of the hotel Lanny examined the two paintings, paid the money, and took the bill of sale with the magical stamp of the fat General's office; also the exit permits. He exchanged the usual courtesies with his S.S. friend, and forbore to ask whether he had recently been down in any cellars, whipping the editors and printers of a Socialist paper.

The paintings were carried to the car and placed in the back seat—fortunately they were not very large. Lanny bade the door-man keep his eye on them, and returned to the hotel and phoned Irma that all was ready. He paid the bill, incidentally mentioning to the clerk that he was driving to Berchtesgaden to pay a call upon the Führer that evening. In the midst of the interest aroused by this conversation, Irma and a well-dressed woman friend emerged from the elevator and went out to the car, followed by a bellboy with a couple of bags. Lanny performed his customary function of distributor of tips; and if it should happen that any of the day staff would compare notes with any of the night staff and realize that a strange lady had passed the night in the Budd suite, Lanny felt sure they would not bother to report it to the *Polizei*.

IV

The strangest ride this habitual motorist had yet taken over the old continent of Europe! Irma had not a word to say, and Trudi respected her wishes; so Lanny conducted himself as a well-trained chauffeur. He had something more than four hundred miles to cover and no time to waste; he kept his eyes fixed on the excellent *Reichsautobahn* before him and his right foot on the accelerator. If any traffic officer on the route Berlin-Leipzig-

Regensburg-Munich ventured to stop him, he had the most perfect of answers; if the authority presumed to doubt his word, he had the document from the office of the second-in-command. Seeing this, any traffic officer would volunteer to ride ahead and clear the way.

It was a road over which Lanny and his wife had travelled more than once. The level plains of Prussia, now green with potatoes and sugar-beets—unless they had been taken over by higher authority and were dusty with the tramp of drilling recruits or with great tanks thundering like herds of stampeding elephants. Lanny thought he had seen military preparations before, but never anything like this. There was hardly a large field without a group of youths wearing sandals and khaki shorts and shirts open at the throat, launching one of their number into the air on a glider. Great planes curved and swooped overhead, and time and again the travellers heard sounds of gunfire. Tourists were free to come into the Fatherland and witness these spectacles, and so for that matter were the agents of Britain, France, and other nations which had signed the Versailles treaty; but apparently no statesman of any nation could think of anything to do but make fussy speeches about it.

The hotel had put a lunch into the car, and after they were past Leipzig Lanny ventured to suggest that Irma should open it up and pass it about. He munched a sandwich while he drove; then, since dead silence seemed hardly polite at meal-times, he bethought him of a new gadget which Irma had had installed in the car—a radio set with which to beguile the tedium of motoring. He ventured to turn it on, softly and diffidently. She made no comment, and so, reaching in front of her knees, he turned the dial: a Nazi orator bellowing; a Nazi newsman denouncing a recent British statement on the subject of German affairs, then, magically, a lovely melody floating out upon the air, an orchestra playing the first movement of the *Pastoral Symphony*. "*Allegro ma non molto*. The pleasant feelings aroused in the heart on arriving in the country"—so Beethoven had written upon the score. It had been the gracious countryside about Vienna which the master had had in mind, and there had been fewer soldiers tramping and not a single armoured tank rumbling, not a single fighter plane roaring in the sky.

It might be doubted if ever in the range of musical history there has been produced a more sustained expression of "pleasant feelings." Lanny had hopes of the effect these sounds might have upon the abnormally silent woman by his side. If music be the food of love, play on! Perhaps it was a live orchestra, perhaps a "canned" one; anyhow, it played, and presently: "*Andante con moto*.

Scene at the Brook." Call it that if it pleased your fancy, but to Lanny it was one of those glider-planes floating over hill and dale; the youth in it thinking not about dropping a bomb upon some of his fellow-humans, but about the mastery of nature, the widening of vision and enhancement of the joy of living. Something like this magical car, which enabled one to speed from one landscape to the next, lending to space an element of time, making geography into history and scenery into panorama.

"*Scherzo*. Jovial assembly of country folk." Lanny knew all about that, for he had shared the festivities of the peasants of Provence, and had learned to dance the farandole as a boy. So many innocent pleasures life offered, if only men could be persuaded not to rob and kill! If only they would let Beethoven teach them how to make more joy for themselves, instead of stealing the joy of others! Here the country folk were interrupted by nothing more dangerous than a thunderstorm; and Lanny, who as a rule did not care for programme music, found these musical sheets of rain so vivid that he had an impulse to start his windscreen wiper. He did not at any time take his eyes off the road ahead, so he couldn't guess whether his moods were being shared by the woman at his side.

"*Allegro*. Pleasurable feelings after the storm, mixed with gratitude to God." Surely no woman could go on quarrelling in her mind while that most heavenly melody laid siege to her ears! Surely she, too, must have gratitude—merely to be alive in a world where such beauty had been imagined and recorded! Surely she must cry out: "Oh, Lanny, let us be kind to each other! Let us be happy, and not miss any more of the holy rapture of being!" But if she had such thoughts she crushed them down, and kept that implacable silence, broken only by practical remarks, as when she pointed out that the petrol gauge was low or offered to take his place at the wheel.

V

The forests of Thuringia, and then the pleasant valley of the River Naab, tributary to the Danube. The last time Lanny had been driven over this route was at night; the S.S. had been taking him to Berlin, for reasons about which they had left him to guess. He much preferred it to be daytime, even if the view was the rather unlovely Oberpfalz, sometimes referred to as the Bavarian Siberia. They came into the city of Munich a little before seven, still having a hundred miles to go and no time to waste. Lanny insisted that he wasn't tired; he knew the route, having studied it while planning schemes for Freddi Robin.

A gentle climb into the foothills of the Bavarian Alps ; the road became more winding, and there were streams, and here and there little lakes which make the district popular with tourists and vacationers. The sun was down behind the mountains, and twilight was gathering. The campers were at supper, or singing their Nazi songs : the young people all wore military insignia now, and all hikes were drills, practice in hiding from enemies or creeping up on them. Lanny knew that he and Irma saw these things through different eyes ; to her it was "Strength through Joy," while to him it was demoralization and cruelty, the breaking to pieces of the Germany he knew and loved in music, literature, and philosophy.

At last the village of Berchtesgaden, named for a witch, Berchta, with whom Bavarian children are frightened into behaving themselves. To Lanny it seemed appropriate that Adi Schicklgruber should have chosen this place for his hiding-place while plotting the bewitchment of Europe. It was still eight miles to the Führer's retreat ; far ahead and high up was a revolving light, like that of a lighthouse, and Lanny knew this to be his destination. "Here's where we have our trouble, if any," he said ; and sure enough, at the entrance of the Führer's road there was a barrier painted with blue and white stripes, and a guard-building with several armed sentries in the black and silver S.S. uniform.

Lanny stopped within a few feet of the obstacle, and when the captain of the guard emerged and flashed an electric torch upon him, he extended his arm. "*Heil Hitler !*" All the Nazis as one returned the salute. "*Heil Hitler ! Heil Hitler !*"

"I have an appointment with the Führer," said Lanny.

"*Ihr Name, mein Herr ?*"

"Lanny Budd."

"*Und die Dame ?*"

"*Meine Frau.*"

The man flashed the torch upon Irma and then into the back of the car, full into Trudi's face. "You have another passenger," he said, his tone indicating surprise.

"My wife's maid."

"*Aber, Herr Budd*, we have no instructions concerning a third person."

"One does not make appointments for servants, surely !"

"*Aber, mein Herr*, it must be specified. It is strictly forbidden—*strengstens verboten*—that anyone shall enter unless we have been notified."

"What do you expect me to do ?"

"The maid will please to wait here until after your visit."

"*Aber*," said Lanny, "we are going out by way of Salzburg. Surely it is not to be expected that we shall drive all the way back here for a maid?"

"*Leider, mein Herr.*"

Lanny had learned that with subordinates in the Fatherland you take a high tone; they expect it and also respect it. "That is ridiculous," he said; "it is contrary to good sense."

"*Leider, Herr Budd. Es ist der Befehl.*"

"Well, in that case, the visit is off. *Wir gehen nicht hinein.* What road do we take to Salzburg?"

Horror revealed itself on the countenance of the officer and of the bystanding S.S. men. To have an appointment with the Führer and refuse to keep it on account of anything on earth! *Undenkbar! Echt Amerikanisch!*

Lanny started to back the car and to turn. "*Bitte, Herr Budd, einen Augenblick!*" exclaimed the officer. "I will telephone." A man might be demoted—a man might be decapitated—for permitting such a calamity as this!

"Speak to the Führer's secretary," commanded the haughty one. "Tell him to tell the Führer that Frau Budd has her maid with her, and wishes to go out by way of Salzburg after the visit, and naturally does not wish to drive eight miles back and then make a detour to get to the border."

"*Zu Befehl, Herr Budd!*"

The officer hastened into the guard-house, and Lanny waited. He hoped that Trudi hadn't fainted from the shock of that torch in her face. He didn't turn round to see.

The officer came out again. "*Ihnen ist's gestattet*," he said, with relief in his voice. "It must be understood that the maid shall remain in the car during the visit."

"Of course," was the reply. "Why should she wish to get out?" The barrier was raised and the car sped on.

VI

The road wound along the side of the Obersalzberg; it had been cut out of solid rock and was quite an engineering job. Lanny drove fast but with vigilance, sounding his horn on all the blind turns. The streaming lights of his car moved swiftly over the sides of the mountain, clothed with pine trees and cut with small streams, each of which had been bridged. There was no better engineer in the world than that General Todt whom the Führer had set to constructing his military highways.

Lanny knew the story of this mountain chalet which had been the Führer's retreat for more than ten years. Originally it had been called Haus Wachenfels, or Watch Rock, and had belonged to a Munich merchant. Hitler had rented it immediately after his release from the brief and amiable term of imprisonment he had served after the Beerhall Putsch. Here he had written, or had had Rudolf Hess write for him, the second part of *Mein Kampf*, and later he had purchased the place and changed its name to Der Berghof—*Berg* meaning mountain and *Hof* meaning yard, farm, manor, mansion, court, or hotel, whichever you chose! The Fürstin Donnerstein had reported that a lot of improvements were being made. Adi Schicklgruber, down-and-out painter of picture postcards, had yearned all his youth to be an architect, and now he had Germany for a building site and the budget of the Third Reich for expenses. He was remaking Munich and planning to remake Berlin, and here in these remote mountains he was listening to the music of the *Waldweben* and the *Feuerzauber*, and building a hiding-place for himself and the wild witch Berchta.

Approaching the house they came upon another barrier and another guard-building with S.S. men. Lanny stopped, they saluted, and he returned the salute and gave his name. They asked: "Who is with you?" and he replied: "My wife and my wife's maid." They peered in with torches and then told him to proceed.

Lanny had always made it a matter of prestige to arrive on time for an appointment; in spite of delays it lacked three minutes of twenty-two o'clock when his car came in sight of the chalet. The drive widened, and there was plenty of space, so he parked discreetly a short distance away. Trudi was resting in the back seat, and he had told her to keep her eyes closed, sleep if she could and in any case pretend to. Strange things must have been going on in the soul of a Social-Democratic outlaw, transported to the very door of the man whom she considered as Satan incarnate. But this was no time to ask her thoughts.

There was a sentry with a high-powered rifle pacing up and down the drive, and in front of the house a machine gun on a tripod, with two S.S. men sitting beside it. The house was of whitewashed stucco, and in the dim twilight, reinforced by the moon, Lanny could see signs of new construction but could not make out the details. When he and Irma neared the building one of the guards switched on a floodlight which shone blindingly in their faces; apparently the inspection was satisfactory, for the light disappeared as suddenly as it had come, and before they had a chance to knock or to ring a bell the door was opened by a man in livery.

The inside of the chalet was modest. The woodwork was stained dark brown, and the furniture was of the modern, tubular metal sort. There was a spacious drawing-room, with wide windows looking over the mountains, significantly towards Austria, only two miles away. There was a grand piano in the room, and a radio cabinet, and in the centre a sort of council table with a dozen or so chairs round it. Here the destinies of Germany were debated and decided; Lanny knew that if Adi could have his way, it would some day be true for the destinies of Europe.

The master of the chalet came forward, wearing the smile which made him attractive in his good moods. He had grown rather stouter, Lanny thought; presumably he was getting plenty of those vegetable plates with butter and a poached egg on top. But his cheeks still had their pasty colour, and the little dark moustache seemed stuck on, like that of the comedian who had set the fashion. "*Willkommen, Herr Budd!*" he said, greeting the man first, according to the continental custom. Then he welcomed the wife and held her hand a few seconds too long—he was fond of ladies' hands, it was rumoured. "I was wondering if you had allowed yourself time enough," he added; when Lanny told him the hour at which they had left Berlin, he exclaimed: "*Ach, Ihr Amerikaner!* I should put you in jail for an outlaw!"

Lanny said: "If you would keep me in a place like this, I wouldn't mind." That pleased the host, and without heeding the other persons in the room he led his guests to the front window and let them see the moonlight on the mountains and valleys. "I am going to build something wonderful here!" he declared. "I mean to have the biggest window in all the world, and in a second storey, so that you can see everything. The statesmen will come from all over to admire this view."

"My guess is the statesmen will be coming for something else," remarked Lanny, and this brought a chuckle. Having read the Führer's book, and many of his speeches over a period of years, Lanny knew his mind and could play upon it, just as he could have played upon the piano which stood invitingly open.

VII

Present in the room were a general, two colonels, and a major; Lanny assumed that a military conference must have been held, but it turned out that they were permanent members of the household. Also two professors, though he did not learn what they professed;

he was sure it included the doctrines of National Socialism and the glory of a one-time "Bohemian corporal." In addition there was a dour grim fellow only slightly older than Lanny, with bushy black hair and eyebrows, a square stern jaw, and silent manner. Having heard him speak at a *Versammlung*, Lanny knew him for Reichsminister Hess, the Führer's deputy in charge of party affairs and one of two or three Nazis who addressed the great man as "*du*."

Had this company assembled out of curiosity concerning a New York "glamour girl"? It seemed most unlikely. Their Führer in introducing them did not refer to Irma's wealth, but said: "Herr Budd is a boyhood friend of our Kurt Meissner, and Kurt tells me that if it had not been for the Budd family, his musical career might not have been possible."

"Kurt is too generous, Exzellenz," replied Lanny. "A man of genius does not give up so easily. Our family was many times repaid by what he taught us, not merely of German music, but of German *Charakterstärke und Seelengrösse*."

The visitor meant to continue along this line, but was interrupted by the entrance of a woman known to both him and Irma; the Frau Reichsminister Goebbels, wearing a low-cut gown of pale-blue Chinese silk crêpe, seeming to accentuate the paleness of her delicate features, also the fact that she had lost weight in the two years since they had met her. Lanny and Irma waited for her to recognize them, and she apparently waited upon the Führer. "Magda tells me you are old acquaintances," he said; and Lanny answered quickly: "The Frau Reichsminister was kind enough to take an interest in our exhibition of Detaze paintings." He didn't want her to mention that he had asked her help in rescuing a Jewish family from prison, for he knew that if that topic was broached their host might spend the rest of the evening denouncing the accursed race.

Magda greeted them cordially, and then seated herself and listened in silence. The Führer had noted the name of Detaze, and remarked: "I remember the portrait you brought me at the Braune Haus; a notable piece of work."

"Your critics both in Munich and Berlin were kind to the exhibition," replied Lanny. "Marcel Detaze is the sort of painter to whom you have given approval."

"I would be glad to have a specimen of his work here in this house when I have completed the rebuilding. I understand that his work is mostly landscapes, *nicht wahr*?"

"Land and sea, Exzellenz."

"Well, suppose the next time you come you bring me what you

consider a representative work, and charge me what you consider a fair price."

"I would be embarrassed to charge you for it, Herr Reichskanzler."

"*Nanu*, what talk is that? If the works are for sale, why not to me? I will give out the fact that I have made the purchase, and it will not merely promote the reputation of a worthy artist, but will be a step towards the reconciliation of Germany and France, which is one of my cherished dreams."

"If you put it that way, I cannot resist."

The word Führer means leader, and means that, among other things, he is privileged to lead a conversation; so Lanny waited. "You still make your home in France, Herr Budd?"

"Most of the time."

"Perhaps you can help me by telling me about the French people: what is it they desire of me, and how can I persuade them of my good intentions towards them?"

"That is not an easy undertaking, Exzellenz. The French are less homogeneous than the Germans—especially as you have made them. You have to think of the French as several different factions, very much at odds with one another."

"And yet, they would all unite against my *Regierung*, would they not?"

"Most of them hope very earnestly that they will not have to. The French desire peace above everything else."

"Then why can I not persuade them to come to reasonable arrangements with me, who also desire peace first of all? You may have read my speech of last May to my Reichstag——"

"I studied it carefully, and so did all my friends in France and England."

"In that I made a special effort to explain myself to both countries, point by point. Yet it would appear that I have not had much success. Can you tell me any reasons?"

"Do you wish me to answer frankly, Herr Reichskanzler?"

"*Vollständig offen!*"

"Also! It happens unfortunately that you have written in *Mein Kampf* that the annihilation of France is one of Germany's aims."

"*Ach, der Unsinn!* We are not talking about literature, but about politics."

"The French note that the book is still being sold, and that you have never repudiated it."

"*Aber!*—that book was written while I was in prison, and very bitter in soul. If I had the time, I would rewrite it; but now I am

in the midst of events—I am no longer *ein verhungelter Schriftsteller*, but a man of affairs, and I reveal my ideas in action. If I make a just and enduring treaty with the French, is not that what really counts ? ”

Lanny could have made reply to this statement : “ Herr Reichskanzler, I am embarrassed to know your literary work better than yourself. It happens that the statement about the *Vernichtung* of France appears in the second part of *Mein Kampf*, which was written, not in prison, but in this very chalet where we now sit, and after you had had a year to recuperate from your eight months’ incarceration—for which, in any case, the Germans and not the French were responsible.” But where in the world was the head of a government to whom one could speak like that ? Lanny well knew that to Adolf Hitler facts had no meaning except as they served his purpose. You might as well try to put a large and lively eel into your coat pocket as to hold him to any reality which didn’t happen to fit in with his purposes and desires.

VIII

Lanny didn’t have to make any further comments, and neither did anyone else ; for the Führer had got started at his *föhrling*. He didn’t want to learn anything, he wanted to tell things ; and Lanny knew from experience both public and private that once he had got started nothing could stop him, and that an audience of two was as good as one of two thousand in the Bürgerbräukeller of Munich, or twenty thousand in the Sportpalast of Berlin, or a million on the Zeppelin field during the Party Day at Nürnberg—due now in a couple of weeks. Lanny had heard Adi speak for two hours and a half, and he knew there were speeches of five hours on the record.

Here was an audience of eleven : four military men, two professors, and a party chieftain ; the wife of the Reichsminister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda ; a Franco-American *Kunstsachverständiger* ; an heiress member of international café society ; and last but not least, the Reichskanzler and Führer of the Third German Reich. He was the one who most enjoyed the oratory and was most deeply moved by it ; the longer he spoke, the greater became his earnestness and fervour, the harder he struck with his fists, the louder he raised his voice, and the more alarming became his aspect.

He informed this small select company what would be the verdict of posterity : that in concluding a compact with Bolshevik Russia, the statesmen of France had committed one of the major crimes as

well as one of the major blunders of history. He said that this alliance with bloody-handed class war could have only one effect and one meaning, as all the world must know; it was directed against Germany, and was an alliance for aggression, since National Socialist Germany had no power to attack France and no idea of doing so. National Socialist Germany desired only to build up its own economy and to solve the dreadful problem of unemployment, as its Führer had pledged himself to his people to do; but here was a barbarian despotism on the Fatherland's eastern border, ruthless and cruel Asiatic hordes actuated by diabolical Jewish-Marxist theories——

So it went. When Adi added the prefix *Juden* to any good thing it immediately became bad, and when he added the prefix to something bad it became a thousand times worse. Look at the spectacle they were now offering in Moscow! Could any man in his senses doubt that the *Juden-Roten* planned to conquer not merely Germany, but the whole civilized world? They gathered their agents from the four quarters of the globe and set them up on a public platform to boast of the crimes they meant to commit. They were using all the border states of Germany as centres of intrigue and secret warfare against the National Socialist Reich; they printed literature advocating sabotage and terrorism, and smuggled it wholesale into Germany; they had hundreds of agents, both native and foreign, working inside the Fatherland to undermine and destroy it. "There can be no safety for any man or woman in our country against the conspiracies and intrigues of these diabolical foes!" shouted the Führer, and Lanny felt shivers running up and down his spine, thinking how at any moment one of the S.S. men might appear in the doorway and announce: "*Mein Führer*, we have discovered a Social-Democratic underground conspirator hiding in the car of your American guests!"

IX

"We are the implacable opponents of this cannibal band," proclaimed the master of all Germany. "And we call upon decent people of all lands to help us hold them down. We and we alone have the means—I do not mean the material weapons, for in that we have been rendered helpless by the wicked Versailles *Diktat*. The *Juden-Bolschewisten* have fleets of tanks enormously outweighing ours, and they have the greatest armada of planes in the world, ready to pounce upon our cities and destroy them without warning. Against all that, we Germans have the pattern of the new society,

and we have the courage and the faith in our own destiny. It is one of the falsehoods of history that the Germans were overcome by arms in the last war—our defeat was due solely to the fact that our moral forces failed us, we fell victims to the stab in the back from these Jewish-Bolshevik vipers we had nourished in our midst."

It took Adi a full hour to run through the gamut of his ideas: He exposed the treachery of France and Britain in failing to disarm—in accordance with the legend which he himself had originated, that they had promised at Versailles to do this. He repeated his assertion that National Socialist Germany was the one truly democratic land, and that he was a deputy elected by thirty-eight million votes. He repudiated every war to subjugate alien peoples, declaring that Germany wanted only Germans, and for this reason her defence forces were the world's best guarantee of peace. "*Friede und Freiheit für alle, das ist National Sozialismus!*" proclaimed the world's champion endurance orator.

Lanny Budd, who had learned all this by heart many years ago, permitted his eyes to stray to the faces of the audience. The military men sat rigidly at attention, that being the discipline they had learned. The professors, now turned pupils, displayed that respect in which German pupils are never known to fail. Black-browed Rudolf Hess, most devoted of disciples, sat like a statue of adoration, his lips slightly parted, as if he were drinking in wisdom by mouth as well as by ear. But most interesting to Lanny was the face of Magda Goebbels; her rather sweet features had worn a melancholy expression two years ago, and now he thought: "Here is the saddest of women!" He knew that her crooked little husband had all the beautiful young actresses of the Third Reich at his command, and the uses he was making of them might well cause his wife to wear an expression of martyrdom. Lanny wondered, what was she doing here? He knew that before her marriage she had been a devoted party worker and contributor to the campaign chest. Had she now taken up some duties which brought her here for conferences? And was she the only woman in this haunt of more than dubious men? No information was offered and of course neither Lanny nor his wife would ask.

X

Did the Führer happen to observe his auditor's eyes wandering? Or had he learned by painful experience that even the most reverent audience can stand only so much? He turned suddenly towards the Americans and said: "It is a shame to weary one's guests with political speech-making."

Lanny was about to utter some polite nothing, when, to her husband's surprise, Irma took the cue. "Not at all, Herr Hitler! What you have said has interested me greatly. I have heard so many charges made against you and your ideas, and now I have had a chance to hear your answers. I want you to know that I agree with every word you have said."

The Führer of the Germans beamed with pleasure. "I am truly pleased to hear you say that, Frau Budd. A person of your influence might do a great deal to correct misunderstandings in America."

"No, Herr Hitler, I have no influence that I know of; but you may be sure that whenever I have a chance I will tell people what you have told me."

A most gratifying outcome of a propaganda effort! Only one thing more was needed, and that was for the husband to speak. "And you, Herr Budd?" inquired the orator.

Lanny got himself together quickly and forced a laugh. "I am a devoted husband," he declared, "and you must know that I wouldn't permit myself to disagree in public with anything my wife says." It was enough to get by with; the great man smiled, and his court circle followed suit.

Having been good pupils, they were now entitled to a reward. The master of the household clapped his hands, one of the military gentlemen pressed a button in the wall, and there came running into the room the most perfectly round creature that Lanny had ever beheld; body like a hog'shead and face like a full moon, or jack-o'-lantern with its grin. "Herr Kannenberg," said Hitler, introducing him with a sweep of the arm. Lanny had heard of him; a *Restaurateur* of Berlin who had become a court favourite and been placed in charge of the Führer's households—the Berghof, the Munich apartment, and the Chancellery in Berlin. He managed the servants, saw to the preparation of the vegetable plates and the non-alcoholic beer, and whenever Putzi Hanfstaengl wasn't on hand he played the clown.

"*Musik!*" commanded the master, and the rolypoly picked up a highly ornamented accordion and seated himself on the piano stool, presenting a truly comical figure, for his flesh was draped over all sides of the frail support and his legs couldn't quite reach the floor. He began to play and sing: "*Tiroler sind lustig, so lustig und froh!*" He hadn't much of a voice, but was jolly, and had made his place in life that way. While he sang, two serving-men brought refreshments, with a special tray for Hitler, who passed as a saint among his followers because of his habits in eating and drinking.

"*Hab' oft die ganze Nacht an ihrer Hütten g'wacht,*" sang the minstrel; and then it was: "*Z' Lauterbach hab' i' mein' Strumpf verlör'n.*" He yodelled mournfully about this tragedy of the lost stocking; and Lanny wondered what Trudi Schultz would be making of the sounds. The day had been warm, and the windows of the drawing-room were open to the cool night breezes laden with the scent of pine and fir. She would hardly be asleep in such a crisis, and the revelry wouldn't seem to her to have any saintly quality; rather it would be that of ghouls dancing over the suffering bodies of her comrades. True Socialism had been murdered, and this base counterfeit was dancing on its grave!

XI

The fun grew faster, and the fat clown's face lighted up with glee, as he began one of those chants in which all over the world country folk mock at the smart people of the cities: "*In Berlin, sagt er, muss du fein, sagt er, und gescheit, sagt er, immer sein, sagt er, denn da haben's, sagt er, viel Verstand, sagt er, ich bin dort, sagt er, viel bekannt!*"

While pretending to listen, Lanny thought about the words which had come from his wife's lips. Did she really mean them, or was it simply part of the quarrel with her husband and with the strange woman who disputed the possession of her husband's mind? To Lanny the words had been like a blow in the face, revealing to him what Irma had been thinking during the past night and day and what he might expect when they were again by themselves. The *Pastoral Symphony* had been altogether without charm to soothe the savage breast.

There came a pause in the revelry, and Hitler said: "A friend of Kurt Meissner should be a musician, Herr Budd."

"On a very modest scale, Exzellenz, but Kurt and I have practised together all the four-hand piano compositions we could find. Would you like me to play for you?"

"*Bitte sehr,*" said the Führer; and Lanny seated himself at the very fine piano. He wasn't going to enter into rivalry with any court favourite; he didn't feel gay at that moment, but on the contrary grief-stricken at the spectacle of the world's woe. He had just seen Loki, god of lies, performing his tricks and winning his triumph; and since Lanny couldn't say in words what he thought and felt about it he would let Beethoven speak. Beethoven was Lanny's friend and refuge in all conflicts with the Nazi Loki; and now Lanny struck the opening chords of the sonata which has been

ineptly called *Moonlight*, but which is an utterance of the most profound and poignant grief. "Come and listen, O mighty Führer, and learn what the great soul of Germany thinks of you and your glory! Come and weep for the ten million little monsters whom you are rearing up to torment and poison all Europe!"

But no, it wouldn't work! Beethoven was dead, and this usurper would take his music and turn it to his own ends. Adi Schicklgruber would be hearing these mournful notes as a lament for his dead Nazi heroes, a tribute to his "blood-flags" and his whole ritual of Moloch! Woe, woe, unending woe, and blood all over the weeping world!

One movement was enough. "*Ausgezeichnet!*" exclaimed the Führer. "I see that you not merely know how to play, but what to play."

"I will be happy to come and help celebrate your house-warming," replied the guest. He wasn't sure whether this household was conducted according to the protocol of royalty and whether he should wait to be dismissed. He guessed it couldn't do much harm if he offered to take himself away before he had worn out his welcome, so he said: "I am afraid we have had more than our share of your time, Herr Reichskanzler."

"We have enjoyed your visit," responded the host, "and hope that you will both come again." It was a dismissal, and the visitors rose. "I regret that I cannot ask you to spend the night," added Hitler. "We have been so crowded here that our guests have to sleep in tents."

"We have friends waiting for us near Salzburg," replied Lanny. "They will be more than ever glad to welcome us when they learn of this honour we have enjoyed." If you can make such speeches at the proper moment you may be assured of enjoying honours in all the courts of the earth.

They shook hands with the company, and Irma exchanged a few words with the Frau Reichsminister. As the Führer was escorting them to the door Lanny said: "One thing, Exzellenz: I am wondering if the border is open this late."

"The border is open all night," was the reply. "If you have any difficulty, phone here and we will straighten it out."

No words could have been more welcome. They went to their car, stepped in, and drove away quickly. When they were out of hearing, Lanny whispered: "Are you all right?" Trudi answered: "Yes!" "Did anyone look into the car?" She answered: "A man walked up and down the whole time, but he didn't look in."

XII

It was only about fifteen minutes' drive to the border. Before they reached it Lanny stopped and said to Trudi: "I want you to sink down in your seat out of sight and pretend to be asleep. I have authority from Hitler to pass through, and I don't believe they will look into the car at all; so we may get by without mentioning you."

"But suppose they do look and find her?" objected Irma.

"I will say that I didn't suppose they were interested in a servant. Trudi will have her passport and exit permit if they demand it." He handed them to her.

"It sounds risky to me," declared the wife; "but it's your funeral."

"I think I know them," he replied. "Watch my smoke!"

He drove to the border post, stopped quickly, and stepped out of his car before the officials emerged with their flashlights. "*Heil Hitler!*" he said, and gave the snappy salute which it was obligatory for every German to return. "*Heil Hitler!*" "*Heil Hitler!*"

Straightway Lanny started his *Rolle*. "We have just come from a visit to the Berghof, and the Führer assured me that the border would be open."

"*Natürlich, mein Herr. Die ganze Nacht.*"

"He has just instructed me, if there is any delay, to have you call the Berghof and he will personally straighten the matter out."

"*Sehr wohl, Herrschaften! Was wünschen die Herrschaften?*"

"I am an art expert and have just come from Berlin, where I have arranged to dispose of some pictures for the Minister-Präsident General Göring. I have here the bill of sale with the stamp of his office. Here also are the passports and the exit permits of myself and wife."

"*Gewiss, gewiss. Wollen die Herrschaften eintreten?*"

"*Nein, ich warte hier. Bitte beeilen Sie sich, es wird spät.*"

Lanny's German was good enough so they wouldn't know he was a foreigner, and his car was one of the sort which confers authority. The officials hastened inside, and in a minute or two emerged with the passport properly stamped. Lanny stepped into his car and started the engine; the barrier was lifted, and the car rolled into Austria.

13

A Brand from Heaven

SALZBURG has an "Old Town" which is just the way it was when it was a Prince-Bishopric of the Holy Roman Empire, some eight hundred years ago. It has a cathedral, a castle on a height, and other medieval features; also, nearly two hundred years ago, an infant called Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in one of its old houses. To some wide-awake hotel-owners of recent times had come the bright idea of a Mozart festival, and this had grown into an elaborate music event lasting the whole month of August; eminent conductors and stage directors were engaged, and crowds came from all over Europe and America. If you wished to have a real holiday you put on Alpine costume, which for the men consisted of dark-grey or brown leather pants, held up by highly ornamental braces. The pants stopped above the knees, and made you feel queer, but it was fine for the mosquitoes. You stuck some sort of trophy in your hat, a *Gemshorn* or a *Spielhahnfeder*. Perhaps you carried a *Bergstock*, and climbed the mountains and hunted the wary chamois.

In the excitement of getting Trudi Schultz out of Germany Lanny had forgotten this festival. But when they came into the new town they found all the smart shops lighted up and crowds coming out from a concert hall; he said: "We may have trouble getting rooms."

Trudi had been weeping softly in the back seat. Now she spoke: "I must not go to a hotel with you; there are bound to be Nazi agents here, and if I am recognized the information will go back to Germany and compromise you hopelessly."

No doubt Irma had been weeping into her pillow the previous night, and might do more of it this night; but Trudi Schultz wasn't going to see it, nor was Lanny. In a voice of studied calm, she inquired: "Just where do you plan to go, Miss Schultz?"

"I will go to Paris. I ought to separate from you at once, and not have you or Lanny associated with me in the public mind."

"As to Lanny," replied Irma coldly, "I have nothing to say. It is my own intention to take the first train to some port where I

can sail for America. You may wish to change your plans when you learn that I shall be travelling alone."

"No, Mrs. Budd," replied Trudi, "that will not alter my plans. I will positively not interfere with Lanny's life, and I am terribly sorry if I have been the means of making unhappiness between you and him." She might have gone on, but the more she said, the worse she would have made it.

II

Lanny suggested that their first problem was to find out if there was a room for any of them in Salzburg. He drove to the Hotel Austria, and was informed that they had no vacant rooms and no suggestion as to where such might be found. There were ten thousand visitors in town. Resorting to the telephone, Lanny got the same information at other places. When he came back to the car, Trudi said: "Let me get out here and take care of myself."

"Where will you go?"

"I will get a cab to the railway station. There might be a train at any hour, and I want to take myself out of your way." She handed him Céleste's papers and got out of the car.

Irma might have said: "You are not in my way," but she didn't. Lanny said: "You may not find it so easy. You will have to get a certificate of identity from the Austrian authorities. And you will need money." He took the wad of bills from his pocket and tried to give it to her.

"I surely won't need so much," she declared; "only enough to get me to Paris and keep me there for a week or two. I will get work and take care of myself after that."

"It may not be so easy as you think," he countered. He divided the wad in halves, and put one half into her hand, giving a sharp push, as much as to say: "Shut up and don't be silly." Trudi obeyed.

"Mrs. Budd," said she, "I cannot go without saying that I am deeply grateful for your help, and with all my heart I regret the trouble I have caused you."

"You can comfort yourself," replied Irma grimly. "If it had not been you it would have been someone else. The trouble has been gathering for a long time."

"Good-bye, Lanny," said the artist. She turned to go, but he followed her down the street. "Just a word, please. When you have a permanent address you must send it to me."

"I ought not to see you again—" she began.

"I'm not going to let you out of my sight until you give me that promise."

"It is a mistake, Lanny; it will break up your marriage."

"That is for me to decide."

"I cannot bear to be the cause——"

"It is something that you cannot help, and it is foolish to try. I refuse to lose track of you."

"Lanny, go back to the car. You will be making your wife furious."

"She has the car and she knows how to drive it. I will follow you now, and to Paris, if necessary, unless you promise to write me."

"I will write," she said; and then burst out: "Oh, Lanny, how dreadful that I should have done this!"

III

Irma had moved into the driver's seat. He wondered if she had been about to leave without him; but all she said was: "Let me drive. We must go to a near-by town, which will not be so crowded."

"All right," he answered. Perhaps it was an overture; and when they were started on the road to Hallein, he began: "There is a lot that I want to say to you, Irma."

"You may say anything you wish; I don't want to be rude and I don't want to quarrel—but you must know in advance that your words will be wasted, because my mind is made up."

"You are going to break with me?"

"I am going to my home, where I belong. I have tried to persuade myself that I could live in Europe, but I know that I hate it."

"You don't want me to come with you?"

"Not while you think and feel as you do."

"Just what do you mean, dear?"

"You know, and it's a waste of breath talking about it."

"Tell me, in plain words, just what are your terms?"

"All right, if you insist. You can be my husband and you can have my love if you are willing to say one sentence: that never again while you live will you have anything to do with Communism or Communists, or with Socialism or Socialists, or anything resembling them, regardless of what name they give themselves."

He closed his eyes as if from a blow. "You know I can't say that

Irma. There are Hansi and Bess, and Uncle Jesse, and Rick, and Raoul——"

"I know them all ; and so I know that our happiness is at an end. Believe me, I have taken a lot of time to think it over—about two years and a half, ever since the Nazis came into power and we went into Germany to meet Hansi and Bess. My common sense told me then, as it's told me every day since : Lanny may be willing to serve as a tail to the Red kite or the Pink one, but such a career is not for me."

A strange thing : he too, had been hearing a voice of what claimed to be common sense. The suppressed half of his personality leaped suddenly into life, and he was startled by the realization that it would be pleasant not to have to lie ; it would be a relief to be able to say what he really thought and do what he really pleased. Be a man and not a mouse !

There was a long silence ; at last Irma said : " Let us talk about practical questions. In the morning I shall return to Salzburg and consult a travel bureau and find the quickest way to get to a steamer. If you will give me Céleste's papers I will take them to her, or air-mail them and instruct her where to meet me. Shall I ship your bags to Bienvenu, or in care of Beauty in London ? "

" I will think it over and let you know," he replied, in a low voice.

" I hope we do not have to quarrel, Lanny. I have had times of bitterness, when I hated what you believed and was tempted to hate you for believing it. But I am prepared to respect your right to your own opinions, and I hope you will do the same."

" Certainly," he replied. " I still love you, you know."

" I have thought about it a great deal. I do not believe there can be love where there is a fundamental disagreement in ideas ; certainly at any rate, there cannot be any happiness in such love. I do not believe in being unhappy, and I know you don't, either."

" No," he assented. One half of him grieved to say it, while the other half was glad.

" There are matters to be settled about Frances. If we can keep bitterness out of our hearts, we won't have to pull her this way and that, or teach her to distrust either of her parents."

" Oh, surely we mustn't do that, Irma ! "

" Before we left the Adlon, I was tempted to make it my condition for helping that woman, that I was to have the right to keep Frances at Shore Acres. But I decided to rely upon your good sense in the matter. You will always be free to come there and to be with her. If you will try not to force your ideas upon her, I will not have to teach her to fear those ideas."

He saw how she had been spending the hours of that long drive through Germany ; he hated to admit, even to himself, that he had been spending some of his hours in the same way. He had thought : " If it were a boy, I would put up a fight for his mind ; but a daughter—no, she will have to be Irma's daughter ! " The twenty-three-million-dollar baby would be ruled by her twenty-three million dollars ! Lanny had tried to have some effect upon the up-bringing of Marceline, and had learned how fixed the ladies are in their ways, how complete is their solidarity and how powerful their discipline.

" There's one serious problem," he said. " Beauty is going to feel herself robbed."

" Beauty has always been kind to me, and all this is not her fault. I will do everything in my power to keep from making her unhappy. She can come to Shore Acres whenever she pleases ; I will give her a house on my estate, just as she gave me one on hers. And that goes for you, too—anything, so long as we don't quarrel, or intrigue against each other for the child's affections. You have seen cases like that, and it is the worst thing that can happen to a young mind ; it can wreck her entire life."

" We must permit nothing of that sort," he replied. " As a matter of fact, Beauty is going to blame me for this mess."

" She will tell you that," said Irma ; " but of course it won't be true." The utility king's daughter had acquired considerable understanding of psychology during six years' association with a munition salesman's ex-mistress !

IV

Hallein is an old and poor town, but they managed to get two connecting rooms in a hotel, and Irma retired to her room with a polite " Good night." As a matter of courtesy she refrained from locking her door, and Lanny, equally courteous, refrained from going near it. Perhaps if he had stolen in and sat on the edge of her bed and wooed her, he might have won her back and persuaded her to give him another trial. He was tempted sorely ; he loved her, and his heart ached with anticipatory loneliness. Was she tempted, too ? His door was not locked, and she might have stolen in and said : " Oh, Lanny, I love you ! Believe what you please, do what you please, I still love you ! " They might have gone on, living a sort of cat-and-dog life, like many other couples they knew.

But no, she had laid down her terms and she would stick by them. Lanny thought : " Can I make promises like that ? Can I

make promises in any way resembling them?" His answer was "No." At least, that was the answer part of the time; but then he would think of that lovely body, lying there waiting for him, perhaps aching for him; then there would be in his soul a duel like that between fiend and conscience which had gone on in the soul of Launcelot Gobbo. "'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience." In this particular case the casuists might have had a hard time deciding which was fiend and which was conscience; it would depend upon the rank you assigned to a man's marital vows and the affection he owed to the mother of his child, as against whatever he might owe to the exploited proletariat, whose ill-requited toil had provided his leisure, his culture—all those things which set him apart from the aforesaid proletariat.

They met politely in the morning. A quick glance at her face showed him that she had been weeping; also that she had done her best with powder and rouge to hide the fact. Was she hurt because he had not come to her? Had her pride been wounded by his pride? He would never know; he had been pushed out of her heart and would not be taken back. When a surgeon cuts living flesh he does not do it by slow degrees; he makes his knife sharp and cuts quickly; and at once the severed stump begins to heal over, forming its own skin and excluding the excised tissues. Lanny recalled some words from *King Lear*: "He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven, and fire us hence like foxes." Here was the brand, and its heat was fierce, and the pain of it.

Irma didn't want any breakfast, she said; just a cup of coffee; she wanted to drive to Salzburg at once, so as to get a morning train. All right, he would take her, omitting no final courtesy. At the travel bureau she learned that, as she had guessed, the quickest route was by Berlin and Bremen. She would take a German steamer—why not? She had always liked the Germans, always got along with them; and there was no reason in the world why she should not proceed through Germany. Was she not a friend of the Führer, having made her personal declaration of support only the previous evening?

It gave Lanny a fresh realization of what the brand from heaven was doing to them. She was going her own way; she had her own life to live, just as he had. She would choose her own friends, think her own thoughts, and speak them—doubtless with the same sense of relief which he felt, but which as yet he hardly dared acknowledge to himself. Was it that way with her? Apparently not. He was surprised by her decisiveness of words and manner. She had a job to put through and she was doing it. Could it be that she was a

harder person than he ; more selfish, or at any rate less sentimental ? How could it be otherwise, if she was going to be a Nazi or to tolerate the Nazis ?

He had a sudden vision of what it would mean to give up his little daughter. Poor kid ! She would be brought up in that world ; and when she was forty would she look like Magda Goebbels ? Thinking such thoughts, Lanny discovered that he might have a hard time not coming to hate the mother of his child. It was a hateful world in which she lived, and she would become one of the pillars of it, one of the makers of it. She hadn't been interested in politics so far ; but Lanny had made that change in her. She would understand what politics meant from now on—the defence of her fortune and her privileges. She would know who was threatening to take them away and what measures to use against those enemies.

Quite a train of thought to have been started by watching a woman pay for train and steamer accommodations and order her reservations telegraphed ahead ! Then waiting while she wrote a telegram to her maid and a cablegram to her mother—and not telling him what she was saying in either !

v

There was just time to catch the train. He drove her to the station, and they stood together on the platform, waiting for the noisy monster which was to separate their lives. Lanny had got himself together ; they had too many memories of happiness, and must not spoil them entirely. " If we must part forever, give me but one kind word to think upon "—so an English poet had written. Irma said : " Don't be too unhappy, Lanny ; and don't throw yourself away. We mustn't either of us have the other on our conscience."

" No, indeed," he replied. " You have been very good to me, perhaps too good, and I shall always be grateful."

" I feel the same way, Lanny. You have taught me a lot—even though you may not believe it."

What did she mean by " throwing himself away " ? Was she referring to Trudi Schultz ? She had seen Lanny walk away with the woman. Had he told her to wait for him here in Salzburg or elsewhere ? Nothing was more likely. Irma wouldn't take much stock in the idea that Trudi would go on pining for Ludy. No, Lanny Budd was a " catch," and any woman who could get him, would take him. But it wasn't Irma's affair, and she had no right to refer to it. One couldn't suppose that either of them would live

the rest of their lives alone. When she left him, she gave him the right to go and find some other woman.

"One thing more, Irma," he said; "a matter of real importance to me."

"Yes, Lanny?"

"You know that I have been playing a double game in Germany. I could not do what I wish to do if the Nazis knew my real feelings."

"I understand that."

"I would like to have an agreement that we will not talk about the reason for our parting. It is really nobody's business."

"That is fair."

"Your family and your friends will not be too deeply grieved because you have left me. It will suffice if you say that our tastes do not agree, and that we prefer different company and different parts of the world to live in."

"You are right."

"You understand," he persisted, "I might some day get into serious trouble if the story got about that you had left me because I was working against the Nazis."

"I have no desire to get you into any trouble," she assured him. "You may count upon me not to discuss your affairs or your beliefs with anyone."

The train came in. Lanny put his wife in her compartment and set her solitary bag beside her. "Good-bye, dear, and God bless you!" There were tears in the eyes of both; it was a tragic moment. But the world was full of many kinds of tragedy. What people think about it and what they want to do about it makes them into different sorts of persons, and they cannot live in the same house or even in the same land. The parting between Irma Barnes and Lanny Budd was like the parting between Germany and Czechoslovakia, for example, or that between the Soviet Union and Finland, or that between the New Dealers and the old-line Republicans in Washington. It was a world-wide phenomenon, and if Lanny and Rick and their friends were right, it wasn't going to end until it had split the whole world down the middle.

He stood on the platform and saw the train depart, with such a sense of desolation as he had never before known in his life. A part of his body, his mind, and his soul had been torn from him; and all of him was one ache. Was he ever going to see her again? And what was going to take her place in his life? His very motor-car seemed different, like an empty house. The seat where she had sat would be haunted; when he sat at table to eat a meal, the seat beside him would be haunted; when he lay in bed it would be the same.

He wished he had insisted that Trudi Schultz should wait for him. It would have been fun to motor her to Paris, a polite brother-and-sister jaunt. He thought of looking up the trains, and perhaps meeting her at the station. But no, he realized that they must not be seen together; if he was to go on helping her work, it would have to be in secret. Easy enough to arrange that in Paris, but not on the road, for one who had as many friends as Lanny Budd. Gossips would get busy quickly—he must prepare his mind for that, among other unpleasantness. Beauty would hear about it soon—and, oh, God, what tears, what agonies of soul! Lanny decided hurriedly that wherever he went for a while, it would be some place where his mother wasn't!

VI

He was free; free as the wind; he could go in any direction—even back into Germany, if he so desired. He had several thousand marks in cash in his pockets, and a fine car; not many men would have wasted away with grief under the circumstances. True, he no longer had the Barnes millions at command, but he had his profession and his valuable card-file—presumably not all the rich would drop him because his wife had done so. Also, he owned a third interest in about a hundred Detaze paintings, and could sell one whenever he needed the price of a meal!

He thought it would be pleasant to meet Zoltan Kertezsi and talk about pictures. Zoltan had been in Paris, but he was a flea, and you might meet him walking down the street in Salzburg; if Lanny sent him a wire he would step into a plane and come. It would have been pleasant punting on the River Thames and talking to Rick, he being one of the few to whom Lanny could tell his troubles. Just to think of him was to be braced in soul; to hear his voice saying: "It's a damn good thing! It'll make a man out of you!" But Rick was some distance away, and if Lanny went to him, how could he keep from running into Beauty?

Then he thought of Hansi and Bess. They, too, were persons to whom he had a right to pour out his heart. He hadn't seen them for more than a year, and what a lot they would have to tell him—South America, Hawaii, Japan, and now this Comintern Congress! How long was the thing likely to last? He decided that his half-sister and her husband were the persons he wanted with him at this unhappy moment; they would be glad, perhaps even gladder than Rick. They had come to dislike Irma—he knew it, in spite of the fact that they tried to hide it. They would welcome him with open arms and

let him drive them wherever he wished. They would go back to *Bienvenu* and play violin and piano duets for a year and a day!

Hansi's comings and goings were usually determined by concert dates. But now the couple had bolted across Siberia in a hurry, on account of the Congress, so it might be a time when they were foot-loose and could have a real holiday. They would labour to make a Communist out of him, of course; but he wouldn't mind—he might even let them succeed for a while. It would be a good way to make sure he had got loose from Irma Barnes!

He had no address for them, but he knew that distinguished artists were demigods in the Soviet Union—that was one of the fine things you could say about the place. He sent a telegram, addressed to "Hansi Robin, American violinist, care of Intourist, Moscow," and reading: "Attending festival Irma returned to New York incompatibility what are your plans suggest returning via Vienna waiting here have car reply Salzburg care American Express Lanny." He guessed that the word "incompatibility" would tell them a book-ful, and he wouldn't have to add "lonesome" or anything like that. "Have car" would help. Bessie Budd, who had also been brought up in a motor-car, would say: "Oh, the poor fellow! We ought to go right away, Hansi." Lanny, knowing them so well, could hear the violinist answer: "In Salzburg, with so much music day and night, anybody can be happy. Let us see the Congress out."

And sure enough, when the reply came it said:

"Concert engagement prevents immediate leaving will arrive approximately one week cheerio conclusion inevitable new horizons beckon you magnificent celebrations here constructive decisions following your party line never say die oceans love Hansibess."

All that was clear, too, and Lanny was pleased to see that his sister's revolutionary zeal had not entirely stifled her Yankee sense of humour. For many years Lanny had been lamenting the factional disputes of the left-wingers, which exposed them all to the menace of advancing Fascism; so now, when the Comintern had formally declared for the united front with all anti-Fascist elements, it was a masterpiece of family tact to say that the representatives of fifty nations in convention assembled were following the party line of Lanny Budd! And when the mountain so politely came to Mahomet surely he couldn't reject its advances!

VII

Lanny didn't bother about hunting a room, because he wouldn't mind driving twice a day through lovely mountain scenery. He

strolled from the Residenzplatz to the Platzl, and from there to the Café Bazar, watching the picturesque crowds; the ladies from Hyde Park and Park Avenue wearing *Dirndl* costumes, the garb of Tirolese peasant girls, consisting of elaborately embroidered aprons over flowered skirts coming up to a low-cut bodice with broad bands at the shoulders. The men who accompanied them, sometimes bald or grey-whiskered, each hoped to be mistaken for a *Bua*, a peasant lad, and failed to realize how their bare white knees gave them away. "*Salontiroler*," they were called by the natives.

Lanny Budd, who had met the members of smart society in a dozen capitals, greeted several persons and might at once have been "in the swim," but it suited his mood to go alone and brood. He stood by the parapet of a bridge and watched the noisy River Salzach cutting the town in half. He inspected the Magic Flute House. He wandered into the Getreidegasse and climbed three flights of stairs to the little four-room apartment where the Mozart family had lived. He inspected the porcelain stove at which the tiny mite of genius had warmed his fingers; and then in the Mozart museum he looked at the clavichord on which the child had learned his delicate and gracious art.

Realizing that he was hungry, a footloose and fancy-free bachelor strolled to the Traube and ordered a *Wienerschnitzel* and a *Gösser-Bier*. Meanwhile he studied the programme of the *Festspiele*. Tickets were scarce, but if you were willing to pay an extra sum you could find what you wanted, and Lanny proceeded to schedule for himself a week of exalted delights—broken only by occasional pangs when he thought of Irma travelling alone and weeping into strange pillows. However, she had little Frances waiting for her; also Mother Fanny Barnes and Uncle Horace Vandringham, to both of whom Lanny was prepared to waive his claim.

With the background of a great fortress on a high rock was a lovely spot known as the Mirabell gardens. A casino had been installed there and you might play all the gambling-games and think you were at Monte Carlo. Also there was a modest bandstand, and in the afternoon you might listen to music. As Lanny strolled through, a gypsy orchestra was playing Liszt's *Walde rauschen*, which is worth anybody's time to hear, so he seated himself on one of the shaded benches of which many rows had been provided. He sat with closed eyes, accepting a great soul's invitation to forget the poms and vanities of this wicked world.

He was only partly aware of the fact that somebody came and sat on the bench beside him. But presently he began to experience a peculiar feeling; the bench was shaking slightly, as if the other

person was breathing hard, or perhaps was afflicted with palsy. People have different ways of responding to the incitements of music, and after this piece was concluded Lanny stole a glance out of the corner of his eye at the middle-aged, rather stoutish gentleman at his side, and realized that he was sobbing softly to himself; carefully repressing every sound but there were tears streaming down his cheeks and he was making no effort to check or remove them.

This wasn't a place of Anglo-Saxon formality, but of Austrian *Gemütlichkeit*; so Lanny remarked politely: "*Schöne Musik!*"

"*Ach, Gott!*" exclaimed the stranger. "*Ein Meister der nicht genug gewürdigt ist!*" It happened that Lanny reciprocated this sentiment, so while waiting for the next number they discussed the Abbé Franz Liszt, the sorrows which had dogged him and the dreams which had inspired him. Apparently it was a Liszt programme, for the orchestra played a *Liebestraum*, which proved to be another provocation to tears. Lanny wondered if the gentleman manifested all his musical feelings in this embarrassing way. From his accent, and also from the fact that there was nothing Austrian about his costume, Lanny guessed that he was an Austrian. From the fact that his light summer suit was so clean, he guessed that he was a man of means.

After they had heard and discussed the rest of the programme, they were friends according to festival custom, and Lanny invited him to some refreshment. They strolled to the nearest *Restauration*, and after they had exchanged names, Herr Gensmann broke down, wept into his stein of cold *Münchener*, and told Lanny that he had the most dreadful of sorrows that could overwhelm a man at a *Musikfest*—he had brought his wife for a delightful holiday, and she had moved herself into the quarters of an actor who was playing a minor role in Hofmannsthal's *Jedermann!* Just leaving him a note, saying that she was no longer happy with him and hoping he would find his *Glück* elsewhere.

"And what can I do?" lamented the suffering stranger. "We are no longer in the Middle Ages, and I cannot go and drag her back by the hair of her head—and anyhow, she is a large woman. Alas, she has money of her own, and unless this actor fellow should lose it all at the gaming-table I can have no hope that she will ever return to me. Oh, such a lovely woman, Herr Budd—a cascade of golden hair, limbs like alabaster, eyes as blue as sapphires"—Herr Gensmann was speaking as an expert, being in the jewellery business in Vienna. He went into details concerning the charms of his lost *Schatz* which left nothing to another married man's imagination.

VIII

It might have been a relief to Lanny Budd to have said : " A strange coincidence, *lieber Freund ; auch ich hab' meine Frau verloren !* " But Anglo-Saxon reticence made it impossible—and besides, it would have set the gossips to work. Herr Gensmann might know any or all of those Viennese *Hochgeborenen* whose art treasures Lanny Budd had purchased. No ; lock your own heart tight, and let the foreigner provide the flow of sentimentality ! Lanny was graciously sympathetic, and the result was important to him, for his new friend asked where he was staying ; learning that he had no room, but was intending to motor back and forth, the economical Austrian soul was shocked, and he said :

" My friend, let me offer you hospitality. My wife and I had each a room, and now—*ach leider !*—one is empty ! Why should you not occupy it ? "

" But," objected Lanny, " suppose your wife should return ? "

" I have no hope ; she is a woman of dominating passions. But if she should come, you will be no worse off than at present. Let me explain that we are paying guests in the home of a very fine Salzburg family, Herr Pergler, an official of the city administration. I have engaged room and board for two through the duration of the festival."

" But would these people be willing to accept an entire stranger ? "

" You perhaps do not understand the customs of this event, Herr Budd ; everybody makes room for as many *Pensionär* as possible. You must know that since the dreadful war everybody in our mutilated country is poor, and in Salzburg many families live the other eleven months of the year out of what they receive for taking care of guests during the month of August. You will meet an interesting family, and unless you have been a paying guest in the past you may find it an amusing experience."

" That is kind of you indeed, Herr Gensmann, and if you will permit me to pay my half of the expenses for the time I am with you, I shall be pleased to accept."

IX

Certainly Lanny did find the Pergler family interesting. They lived in one of those large apartment buildings which are prominent in the city, having a chimney-pot for every other tier of windows ; the streets are narrow, and at night the district buzzed like a beehive.

Lanny assumed that the members of the family must be sleeping on the kitchen floor; for the jeweller had the living-room and Lanny the room just behind it, separated by a curtain which it was necessary to push aside on account of the heat. All shared the bath-room, and crowded about the small table in the dining-room. Lanny had never before lived in such close proximity to other human beings; but it was made easy by the charming good humour and naïveté of this family.

They were all young, or acted that way. Mutter Pergler was sprightly and gay, with a mass of black hair, sparkling eyes, and well-rouged cheeks. Vater Pergler was small and lively, with pince-nez and a sharp little dark moustache. There were two daughters, Julie and Auguste, one sixteen and the other fourteen; they had been named for the months they were born in, but "Gusti" had come first. Also there was little Hansel, the kid brother, who like all such brothers would have told the family secrets, only this family left nothing to tell. They were tremendously thrilled to have an American film star—for so Lanny seemed to them—walk into their house; they had all been to the cinema and were fully informed about that miraculous land where poor working girls live in rooms the size of ballrooms and always have their hair perfectly waved. Lanny owned a car, which made him many times over a millionaire, and when he took the family for a ride he conferred delight beyond imagining.

Not only were they getting twenty-five Austrian schillings a day from him, but they were going to get English lessons as well. They made a family compact—nobody was allowed to speak a word of German, and it produced amazing phenomena, because they all wanted to talk, sometimes more than one at a time, and they pronounced English the way it looked to Germans and ordered the words as in German. They didn't mind if Lanny laughed—the nicest thing about them was that they laughed at themselves as well as at each other and all the rest of the world. They were the oddest combination of sophistication and simplicity; they were certain that they were the world's most artistic people, but also its most unfortunate. Pretences were impossible; only art, beauty, and laughter were left to an Austrian.

The third supper that Lanny enjoyed in this home—plain country food, with delicacies embarrassingly served for the guests while all the others pretended they didn't care for them—Lanny saw tears running down the cheeks of the slender pale lily named Gusti. He thought it was the *Schlagobers* he was putting on his fruit, and he offered her some, whereupon she burst into tears and

fled from the room. "Na, na," said Mutter Pergler, "don't give her attentions, *bitte*, it is just that she has in love with you fallen."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the shocked *Pensionär*.

"Do not yourself trouble," said the mother comfortingly. "It is just the age that she comes to."

"She believes that they are a prince," added Julie, addressing Lanny in the plural as she would have done in German.

"She is getting a camera—what is it?" put in the kid brother.

"To picture, to have for *Andacht verrichten*—"

"To say her prayers to," explained the mother, forgetting that Lanny knew German better than he knew the Pergler English. "It will all be well when you are going, Herr Budd. She will love-memories cherish when there is music. *Aber, bitte*, do not allow that she shall run away with you."

"Oh, surely not, Frau Pergler!"

"Of course, unless you please would like to marry her," suggested Julie politely.

"How could he marry her," argued the Mutter, "when he already in America a wife has?"

Said the head of the family, who spoke fairly good English: "There is a place called Reno that they can go to."

He pronounced it as if it were German: Rain-o. "Is it then so wet as we have it here?" inquired Julie, not making a pun, but seeking information.

X

With these family scenes as comedy interludes in the Shakespearean tradition Lanny went from one to another of the great events of the festival. He saw *Faust* as a Reinhardt spectacle, also the morality play called *Everyman*—giving special attention to that actor who had extended his hospitality to Herr Gensmann's wife! He heard the Vienna Philharmonic perform Mendelssohn's *Reformation Symphony*, also Bruckner's *Fourth*. He heard *Don Giovanni* conducted by Bruno Walter, and *Fidelio* conducted by Toscanini. In a chamber concert hall he listened to a very fine rendition of the *Hammerklavier Sonata*, and learned how he might have played the piano if he had ever really had to work. The great adagio movement began with Lanny's grief because Irma had left him, and ended, as always with the major works of Beethoven, as a lament for all the sorrows which tyranny and greed had inflicted upon the human race.

Sometimes he took his newly made friends with him. They sat in the summer courtyard of the Residenz on a lovely warm evening and listened to a string orchestra playing Mozart's *Serenades*. It was dark, except for dim lights at the desks of the musicians; the love-smitten Gusti sat as close to Lanny as it was possible to get and shivered with bliss. There wasn't anything he could do about it, except to take it as her parents did, a biological phenomenon; girls were that way when they got that way, and all any *Mutter* or *Vater* could do was to urge her to eat her meals, so that she wouldn't fade away entirely. Lanny escorted them all to a café and ordered her to eat one cheese and one salami sandwich, and she obeyed, gazing at him with adoring sheep's eyes in the meantime.

The town was crawling with celebrities, and autograph-hunters flitted here and there. The gossip-collectors cocked their ears; so many people were misbehaving in one way or another that it was really delightful. What chuckles when the tempestuous Toscanini was scheduled to open a concert with the overture to Rossini's *Ladder of Silk*, but the score and parts had been lost; he had taken them home to mark certain nuances, and they had vanished. He played all the other numbers on the programme while a frantic search was made—two separate trips to his villa, and finally the missing papers were found in the bottom of his laundry-basket; his chauffeur had carried them into the kitchen, and the maid had found what she thought was a safe resting-place.

Even upon the shrine of the Muses rude politics forced its way. Salzburg stood for the freedom of art, which meant that without intending it, indeed while terrified by it, the town had come in contact with the Nazi steam-roller. First of all, the Jewish question. This was the twelfth season in which Max Reinhardt had produced those spectacles which had won fame throughout the world and brought visitors by the thousands. One of the favourite conductors, Bruno Walter, was a Jew; also, Toscanini had refused to conduct at Bayreuth as a protest against Nazi interference in the affairs of art. Since the music of Mendelssohn was banned from Germany, the maestro revived a long-neglected symphony, the *Reformation*, and gave it here several times with *éclat*. As a result, Hitler had imposed a thousand-mark fee for visas, making it impossible for German artists and tourists to attend the festival. The rest of Europe had responded by making it impossible to find hotel accommodations in the town.

It was war, and the Salzburgers shivered with dread every time they thought about it. Up there in the mountains dwelt the ogre, glaring down upon them. Last summer he had murdered their

Chancellor Dollfuss, and what would he do this summer? There had been serious talk of calling off the festival; but, *in Gottes Namen*, how would the Perglers and thousands of other families have had anything to eat during the winter? And without art, what would they have had to live for? Every time the thunder rumbled they shivered in their beds, wondering if the ogre had hauled guns up the new road he had built and was starting to pound their tiny historic city into rubble and ashes.

An hour's drive to the north of here, in the valley of the River Inn, lay the town of Braunau, where this ogre had been born, or perhaps hatched; and Papa Pergler interpreted him according to geophysical principles. There were, he insisted, chemical substances in the heavy fogs which arose from the Innviertel which affected its residents with strange forms of madness. A gently rolling and beautiful country, all the more dangerous to its inhabitants and to the outside world because it lulled suspicions by its peaceful appearance. From it had come an immense German epic known as *Meier Helmbrecht*, which tells about a peasant boy who leaves the home of his fathers and acquires enormous wealth as a brigand knight; he comes back, riding a fine horse and followed by a train of lovely ladies, and astounds the people of his native valley by the splendour of his gifts. "Is that not a direct prophecy of Adi?" asked the Salzburg public servant.

And that was only one of many instances. In that same Innviertel had lived a man who called himself a doctor, and took his patients into a dark chamber, rubbed them with a little electrical stick, and cured them of their diseases. He had prospered so greatly that the government had preferred to collect taxes from him instead of putting him in jail. Also a man who had made gold out of salt water; he had succeeded in interesting the last Kaiser in the enterprise, and had become so rich that he bought the Braunau castle which contained the tomb of Attila. "Get yourself one idea, the crazier the better, and say it a million times," said Herr Pergler, and added that the coat of arms of the Innviertel portrayed the so-called *Stierwascher*, the "Bull-washers." At the fair held in the district a prize had been offered for the best white bull, and one group of growers had no white one, but had taken a fine black one and set out to make it white with soap and water. They had persisted to the very end and had entered the black bull as white. Said Lanny's host: "You may be certain that at least one of those *Stierwascher* was named Schicklgruber."

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XI

Lanny had telegraphed his address to "Hansibess," and in due course received a wire telling him that they were leaving Moscow, and then another stating on what morning they would arrive. He was on hand to meet them, and drove them down into the lovely Salzkammergut, summer playground of Austria. They could talk freely in the car without fear of eavesdroppers; also while sitting on a mossy bed by the side of a tumbling mountain stream. Lanny had had a lunch put up, so they had the whole day undisturbed. They had not met for more than two years, and had no end of things to talk about. To Lanny their arrival was a blessing; they helped to heal the wounds of his spirit, and gave him courage to maintain his own integrity of mind and purpose.

Lanny and Irma had made an agreement that neither would mention Trudi Schultz in connection with their separation. It would inevitably mean a sex-story, for who would believe denials by either of them? They were going to say that they were parting because of "incompatibility"; seven syllables from the Latin which can be made to cover a multitude of sins! Now Lanny thought it enough to say that he had wanted to help the underground movement against Hitler, and Irma had become angry and had decided to go home. Everything her husband believed annoyed her, and it had got so they could no longer talk about the events of the world or tolerate each other's friends.

Said Bess: "You can't imagine what a relief that telegram was, Lanny. It had seemed to us that you were disintegrating; submitting yourself to that woman and being dragged round at her apron-strings. An utterly impossible situation, and we both hope it is over for good."

The grand-daughter of the Puritans had matured into a clear-sighted and determined woman. She was twenty-seven, and a decade of continual piano practice had developed a sturdy physique. Her features were regular, though the nose was a trifle long and thin; she greatly resembled her mother, who was shocked by her ideas and the company she kept, but was able to recognize the functioning of the New England conscience. Bess wore her straight brown hair in a bob, and had devised for herself a simple dress for all purposes. It was in one piece, opening at the shoulder and slipping over the head. She had it made of different materials, but always dark brown, with a little gold braid at the shoulders and a belt of the same; no other ornaments. When she came on to the

platform, following her husband, she went straight to the piano and seated herself, and her aspect and manner said: "Do not look at me, but listen to the music of great men." When she finished an accompaniment, she sat still, unless Hansi came and brought her forward to make a bow.

All her life was lived on the same plane; she laboured to perfect her art, and likewise her mind and character. She would tolerate no frivolity or cynicism, and when she heard such sentiments expressed she would rebuke them by silence. She had just been having a great experience and was flushed with enthusiasm concerning it. She had found the Russians to be kindred spirits; *seriosmye ludi*, that is to say, "serious people," interested in re-making their world in accordance with rational principles. Corrupt and self-indulgent individuals there were, of course, and self-seeking politicians; but the mass of the young people had grown up with the idea of making a free workers' commonwealth. All of them were labouring diligently, studying and thinking. They were pioneers, not so different from those forefathers of Bess who had landed on a stern and rockbound coast and had toiled and suffered for the right to follow their own consciences.

The youth whom Lanny had once called the shepherd boy out of ancient Judea was now a man of thirty; tall and slender, with large dark eyes, wavy black hair, and an expression of great sweetness. But not without sternness, for he was a child of the Prophets, and his forefathers had taught those of Bess. It had been with the old Hebrew Testament in their hands that the Puritans had found courage to brave the stormy ocean and risk starvation and massacre by savages. So these two were one in their faith as in their art, and they had found confirmation of all they believed in that Comintern assembly of four hundred men and women from fifty nations of the earth. What speeches, what parades and celebrations—and, above all, what music! To the Jewish violinist and the American accompanist it had been worth many years of hard work to come out upon a platform and play the Tchaikovsky concerto for audiences so eager and appreciative.

XII

Lanny listened to their stories and wished he had that sort of mind and could enjoy that firm clear faith. But at any rate he was free to hear them without having any sense of guilt! He could talk to any sort of people he liked, and not feel that he was displeasing his wife! He told about his interview with Hitler; what the

Führer had said about the Comintern Congress, and then what Irma had said to the Führer. Lanny had been asking himself over and over : " Did she really mean that, or was it just a burst of rage ? " He put the question to Hansi and Bess, and the latter said : " Those Nazis will be swarming to Shore Acres, and she'll be running the most elegant salon for Jew-baiters ! "

Lanny mentioned the queer regime under which he was now living. The Perglers had heard of the Hansi Robins and clamoured to meet them ; so, towards sundown, the *Pensionär* drove his relatives back to Salzburg. He packed his bag and paid his debts, and then treated the family to a grand farewell supper, also to a song recital of a unique sort—the American Negro contralto, Marian Anderson, setting a sophisticated European audience afire with her singing of spirituals. A perfect evening—except that at the parting the love-lorn Gusti fell into a dead swoon, and Lanny had to take her and her mother home in the car. He carried the girl upstairs to the apartment and she fainted again in his arms. It certainly made a dramatic climax to a festival week.

After midnight the three travellers set out on their journey, and spent the night at a roadside inn. Next morning they rolled southwards through the Brenner Pass with its steep pine-tree-covered mountainsides, its roaring streams, and small green lake. Here is the main gateway into Italy, by which the Teutonic invaders came ; later, over a period of six hundred years, the historians are able to count sixty-six emperors who traversed these twenty-five miles upon one errand or another. To Lanny Budd the most real was an empress by the name of Irma Barnes, whom he had driven down these slopes several times—the last time less than two years ago, after their futile attempt to get Freddi Robin released from the Dachau concentration camp. Lanny didn't mention it to the stern granddaughter of the Puritans, but one half his being was an ache of longing for Irma, and he kept thinking : " Can I let her go ? "

BOOK FOUR

TRUTH FOREVER ON THE SCAFFOLD

14

When We Two Parted

I

BIENVENU was vacant except for the servants, who had been well content to 'own the place for a while and be paid for it. The pale-blue paint was beginning to look dingy on the wood trim of the stucco buildings, and ordinarily Lanny would have set workmen to sprucing things up before the season began. But now Irma was gone, and perhaps they were going to be poor; he ignored the suggestions in his mother's letters and saved her money. He and his guests took possession of the Villa for sleeping and meals; the rest of the time they spent in Lanny's studio, waking the Cap d'Antibes with music, and afterwards swimming off the rocks in the Golfe Juan.

Hansi and Bess had been doing a lot of travelling, and were glad of this respite, the pleasantest they could have imagined. Nobody to bother them; no company save the greatest and best. "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life"—so John Milton had written; and here were books, including Milton's, lining the walls, and in the vacant spaces paintings of Marcel Detaze, and several cabinets with stacks of music for both violin and piano, Lanny's accumulation from boyhood. These master-spirits did not intrude themselves, but awaited your convenience; when you took them from the shelves they poured out treasures more precious than all the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind, or where the gorgeous East with richest hand show's on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.

It was unfortunate that Lanny and his relatives couldn't have lived with the poets and composers, and left the evil problems of the time to solve themselves. But Bess was full of the propagandist spirit acquired in Moscow, and was hoping to convert her half-brother once for all and dedicate him to righteousness as a member of the Communist party of France. It all seemed so obvious and

simple to her ; she had a set of formulas as carefully worked out as any proposition of Euclid—and to her mind as compelling. All that one had to do was to understand and accept them, and further thought on the subject became superfluous.

It was a military view of society. The great mass of the world's workers were in chains, the invisible chains of the competitive wage system ; there were only two things to be done : first, make them aware of the chains and, second, guide them in throwing them off. This double job required a discipline known as the dictatorship of the proletariat ; then, when both jobs were done, the evil state machine would wither away and the workers would rule themselves in a free society. All this was elementary, and after the demonstration in the Soviet Union there was no longer any possibility of doubting it ; the Russians had set the pattern, and workers of other lands had only to follow in their footsteps.

But to Lanny it seemed more complicated. Old Russia had had virtually no middle class, and the governing class had been paralyzed by defeat in war. But other countries had a large middle class, self-conscious and powerful, and when you tried to jam through your proletarian revolution, what you got was Mussolini or Hitler ! So then came arguments : Who was to blame for the wrong kind of dictators ? How had they come ? Lanny thought he ought to know, for he had been there and seen. Grant that Mussolini and Hitler were agents of the capitalist class, subsidized to put down the Communists ; that didn't change the fact that they had succeeded, or the fact that success was based upon their posing as members of the lower middle class, saving it from being ground between the millstones of capital and labour.

Lanny argued : " In the English-speaking countries we have at least partial democracy in political affairs, and why not use it to get more and to extend it into the economic sphere ? Wouldn't that be wiser than risking everything, and perhaps losing it as you have seen the workers do in Italy and Germany ? "

But that meant the parliamentary system ; it meant going into bourgeois politics—and so came a vehement debate. Look at Ramsay MacDonald, look at boondoggling and the N.R.A. and the other messes of the New Deal ! Look at what had happened in Spain in the last four or five years ! The people had made a revolution, they had driven out the wretched Alfonso and put in a jurist and man of letters named Azaña, who had believed so completely in moving gradually that he had stood entirely still, and the starving workers and peasants had been so discouraged that two years later the so-called Anti-Marxist Coalition had been able to carry the elections.

"You will see the same thing here in France if you elect a parlour aesthete for your Premier!" exclaimed Bess. "A Socialist lawyer who makes elegant speeches, but wouldn't dream of doing anything to hurt the feelings of your two hundred families!"

"Is that the way you look upon Blum?" asked Lanny, surprised—or pretending to be. "I thought your Comintern Congress had just ordered a *front populaire*?"

"We're willing to do our part," replied the grand-daughter of the Puritans. "But that doesn't obligate us to fool ourselves as to the outcome."

Said Lanny: "I doubt very much if anybody can give effective co-operation in a cause that he feels is bound to fail. It will be humanly impossible not to show your real attitude, and you'll be helping to bring about the very failure you expect."

II

So went the controversy; and after a few days and nights of it they had to agree that they disagreed, and would not talk about current problems any more. The same truce that Lanny had had to make with Irma! The fact was, these issues had become so urgent and feelings ran so high that tolerance was too difficult. All over France the various groups isolated themselves, and didn't go where they would meet their political rivals. The task of a *salonnière* such as Emily Chattersworth now exceeded her powers. In the old days she had been able to act as moderator, and when arguments became too hot to turn them off with a witticism; but now the contending intellectuals would almost come to blows, and the more dignified and less noisy would refuse to return unless they were assured that only their sort was to be present.

It was the same also in the École des Travailleurs du Midi; the Socialist and the Communist students had been arguing for years, and while Lanny was overseas they had come to a break. The Communists were accused of trying to sabotage the institution and were expelled in a body. Raoul had written Lanny a long letter about it, which Lanny hadn't known how to answer. Now, as the first effect of the *front populaire* programme, the Communists wanted to be taken back and have another chance. But the moderates insisted that the Communists had shown themselves incapable of co-operation; they wouldn't and couldn't be sincere about anything except the promotion of their party, and, no matter what promises they made, they would always be "boring from within."

Raoul Palma of course had to know what Lanny advised. Irma being gone and Beauty not yet come, Lanny could invite him over to Bienvenu to lunch—cautioning him not to bring up the question in the presence of two Red musicians! No, said Raoul, it was his hope that Hansi and Bess would come over and play at an evening affair, which might serve as a kind of ceremony of reconciliation. At least both Reds and Pinks could listen to the same music!

Lanny went for a walk with his friend, enjoying the opportunity to exchange ideas with somebody who didn't consider him an idler and a weakling. What was this about Spain? he asked, knowing that refugees were coming and going and that Raoul was in touch with most of them. A terrible situation, the school director replied; in a so-called republic the workers and peasants were being ground under the heel of the army and the church forces, and thirty thousand were starving and dying in the foul prisons of that unhappy land. Elections were to take place early in the new year, and already the campaign was under way. All the workers' groups throughout France were being asked to contribute funds. If Comrade Lanny could make a donation—and Comrade Lanny of course said that he would.

Conditions were disturbing here in the Midi, also. The Fascist groups were becoming more and more active, and were resorting to gangsterism, as in all the countries bordering on Italy and Germany. They were provided with funds not only from French capitalist sources, but also from abroad. Italian agents were working openly, boasting that they meant to bring all the Mediterranean shores under their system. Some fourteen years ago Lanny had heard Mussolini declare: "*Fascismo* is not for export." He had accepted the statement then, but now he understood that what *Fascismo* said and what *Fascismo* did bore no necessary relationship.

What were the workers going to do in the face of such a situation? Arm themselves? But that gave the enemy a basis for charging that the workers were planning civil war. The reactionaries had nine-tenths of the money, also nine-tenths of the press with which to spread confusion and fear. Said Raoul: "The extreme Left has Russia for a pattern and the Right has Italy and Germany, but where is the pattern for those who believe in the democratic process?"

"We have to make our own pattern," was the reply. "We have to educate the people and organize them into our new united front. We must oust Laval and his gang, and put in Léon Blum."

What was Lanny himself going to do? Merely give advice, which is so cheap all over the world? No, there was something expected of those few among the Socialists who had money. The grandson of Budd's must give until it hurt; he must give not merely

the cost of a new coat of paint for the wood trim of the Bienvenu houses, but also what he would have to spend for new clothes in order to please his mother and her fashionable friends. He must get a typist, and study his card-file, and write more letters so as to find customers for paintings.

III

There had been two letters awaiting him at Bienvenu. One from Irma, posted in Bremen, telling him that she was sailing, and wishing him happiness and success. Not a word about her own feelings; she was going to let the wound heal by first intention, as the surgeons say; not reopening or disturbing it. Lanny had lost his wife. He was startled and dismayed every time he realized the fact. And right away he would begin thinking: Could he get her back? And did he want to? He would think: "I have affronted her mortally." He would ask himself: "Am I sorry? Or would I do it again?"

The answer was sometimes "Yes," and sometimes "No," sometimes both. It was confusing, and he could think of overwhelming arguments on both sides. Could he have refused to help Trudi with money? Of course not! Could he have left her to wander about the streets all night and finally jump into one of the canals? No, again! On the other hand, perhaps the error had been in not telling Irma. Frankly and honestly, like a man, not playing the sneak and the cheat. He could hear her saying that, weeping into her pillow on a German steamer. He argued it with her in his mind: "Suppose I had told you, what difference would it have made? You'd have refused to go into Germany; but you'd have felt wronged, you'd have been angry. Sooner or later you'd have realized that you were being made to serve as the tail to the Pink kite, and you'd have told me not to come home. Isn't that so?"

Irma would have to admit that it was; and so what difference did it make, really? What harm had he done by taking her into Germany? What harm *could* he have done? The Nazis would certainly not have arrested her. They might have asked her questions, but she would quickly have made plain that she had been imposed upon. Far from doing her harm, Lanny had got her an interview with Hitler—something that would be a feather in her cap for the rest of her life. Especially if she really felt as she had stated in the Berghof; if she was going to let herself serve as the tail to the Nazi kite!

"It's the indignity of the thing that I object to"—so she would answer in these imaginary debates. He would say: "Tell me this: if I had left you in Shore Acres and gone into Germany, would you have told your mother what I had gone for? And would your mother have told your uncles? And how do you know how far it might have gone? Can you say it couldn't have got into the gossip columns? Or that it couldn't have reached some Bund member in New York? 'The prince consort of a glamour girl is in Germany, giving money to the underground movement, trying to help undermine the Führer of the Nazis!' How many hours would it have taken to reach Berlin? How many minutes before the Gestapo got on the job?"

"No, no, Irma! You have to admit that if your husband is going to be a secret agent, he has to be secret." "But I don't want that kind of husband," Irma replies; "and so good-bye and best wishes." That is going to be her phrase: "I wish you all success." But will she mean it? Will she say it also to Hitler and to his agents in New York? Certainly she cannot mean both; for if the Führer of the Nazis gets what he wants, the grandson of Budd's loses everything that he wants; and vice versa! 'The utility king's daughter may wish to be polite to both sides in this war, but the time will come when even she will have to choose!'

IV

The other letter was from "Korumahler," and it, too, was brief and formal. "Just a line to tell you that I am in Paris, and to say once more how grateful I am for your kindness. I will let you know when I have some sketches to show you, and when I have a permanent address."

To this note also he gave no little thought. Trudi was going to keep her alias, even though she was safe in France; and what did that mean? She was going to do some sort of work which German agents in Paris were not to find out about. To manage that, she would have to keep away from other refugees; at any rate, from all but one or two whom she might trust. Perhaps she would have Lanny as her contact with Germany. Or perhaps she wanted to be free to go back now and then. She might even want him to take her back. Lanny shivered when he thought about it, but he knew he would have to stick by her. Whatever Trudi demanded of him, his uncomfortable conscience would compel him to do.

She gave him no address. That meant she didn't want him to

come until she was ready ; until she had some " sketches "—that is, some plan worked out, requiring money or other help. Well, that was what he wanted, wasn't it ? Surely he didn't expect to go to Paris and drink coffee with her, or take her to a show, or driving in the Bois ! He wasn't expecting to get her some presentable clothes and introduce her to his mother's smart friends ! What had bound him to her was precisely the fact that she was different from the other women he knew. She was that stern daughter of the voice of God whom Wordsworth had sung. She and her friends—Lanny thought once more of the line from an old German poem which made him quail : "*Wir sind all des Todes Eigen.*" We are all death's own.

There came a cablegram from New York : " Arrived safely after pleasant trip. Frances well and happy good luck to you Irma." So she was doing the polite thing, as they had agreed. It was her duty to let him know about the child ; but to say that the child was " happy " when her father was absent might be taken as a hint for the father to remain absent. How easy to have said : " Frances is well but misses you " ! If she had said that, what would he have done ? Bought a steamer ticket ? Or sent a cablegram asking : " Would Frances like me to come and see her ? "

They were neither of them accustomed to saving cable-tolls, and this message to her husband was perhaps the shortest that Irma Barnes had ever sent. " Pleasant trip," she remarked ; it wasn't economy which kept her from saying : " Pleasant but lonely." Lanny thought : " She's really going to end matters ! " He thought. " I wonder if she's debating the problem as I am. I wonder what are the thoughts she doesn't write." Not wishing to be outdone in politeness, he answered : " Hansi and Bess here making music best love to daughter affectionate regards sorry." He might have said less and he might have said more. He desired to meet her approximately half-way.

V

The musical couple took their departure by steamer from Marseilles. They were going to find a home somewhere on the Connecticut shore, near the rest of the family ; also, they were going to have a baby. Mama had written to Bess, pleading for this greatest of all favours ; not the first letter of the sort, but the most importunate. They had been married nine years, and surely, if ever—! Mama pointed out that Freddi was gone, and mentioned that Rahel was interested in a young man who was Papa's capable assistant. What

a good Jewish mother wanted was for her firstborn to have a son, and the most perfect piano accompaniments could not take the place of this duty which Bess owed to the God who was her forefathers' God as well as Hansi's. Swear now therefore unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house !

Lanny, left alone, had too much time for brooding over his loss ; so he hunted up his old friend and tutor, Jerry Pendleton, who didn't worry overmuch about the state of the world, but played a fast game of tennis and liked to swim and go fishing. His little French wife was running the Pension Flavin in Cannes, and the boarders could as always be depended upon to eat the fish. Lanny entertained his friend by telling about being a boarder in Salzburg ; Jerry in turn told his troubles—his wife's mother had died, and an aunt owned half of the pension and didn't get along very well with her niece. "Hang all women !" was the ex-tutor's comment, and Lanny would have assented, only this might have been taken as a hint concerning Irma.

It was his duty to let his mother and father know about his marital situation. But just how much ? Robbie would be grieved, but probably not greatly surprised. Robbie knew that he had an erratic son, and wouldn't expect permanent rationality from him. Lanny was Robbie's wild oat, and the sins of the fathers were being visited upon the children ; Robbie had paid a lot, and must be prepared to pay more.

But Beauty was different. Beauty didn't want to pay for her sin ; Beauty hated to pay any sort of bill whatever. Beauty wanted what she wanted and couldn't bear to have it snatched away from her. In short, Beauty was going to raise the very devil, and Lanny kept thinking how he could evade payment of that debt. Should he take a trip round the world, as Hansi and Bess had done ? Or should he go and see Russia, as they had urged ? Perhaps he might suddenly be called to London, the very day that Beauty set out for *Bienvenu* !

He wrote a note to both parents, telling of his successful business deals in Germany, his meeting with Hansi and Bess, and their visit ; he added : "Irma got lonesome for Frances and decided to sail to New York from Germany. I had to come here on account of some of the problems of the school." He guessed that this wouldn't fool either the shrewd man or the shrewd woman of the world. Robbie would phone Irma and, learning that the trouble was serious, would go to Shore Acres and get the story. Beauty would begin having fits ; and sure enough, here came a letter by air-mail : "Lanny, what does this mean ? Is there something wrong between you and

Irma? Do for God's sake write me the truth right away, for I am deeply troubled."

The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God! Lanny would tell the first and the last, but surely not the middle section. He wrote: "Irma and I disagree, as you know, about our friends and about our purposes. We thought it might be wiser if we stopped arguing for a while. There is nothing for you to worry about, and please don't."

Nothing to worry about! Lanny could imagine his darling mother reading that sentence and bursting into a hysterical laugh. Nothing to worry about in the prospect of losing the brightest star that ever shone in the diadem of a mother-in-law! Nothing to worry about in losing a hold on twenty-three million dollars—to say nothing of a twenty-three-million-dollar child in which Beauty certainly had a share! All that prestige, that glory! All those beautiful dresses that Irma turned over to her after wearing them only two or three times—and that required only some letting out! All that security against panics and debts—look at how Irma had saved Robbie from ruin during the Wall Street crash and how she had helped to set Robbie up in the aeroplane business! Nothing to worry about!

Beauty and Marceline were guests of Margy at her country place. They were meeting the smartest people, riding horses, dancing, having a lovely time; but all that was nothing in the face of impending calamity. Beauty sat down and wrote a telegram: "Must see you at once will come Bienvenu unless you are coming north please wire your plans."

Lanny replied by air-mail: "It is foolish of you to try to interfere between Irma and me. Believe me, dear, there is absolutely nothing you can do. I expect to be in Paris soon on business with Zoltan, and after that I'll run up to see you unless you are soon coming south. In the meantime I beg you not to excite yourself. Irma and I are not going to quarrel or make any scandal. She especially charged me to tell you that she would welcome you to Shore Acres at any time, and would give you a house there, as you gave her one.' We agreed that we are positively not going to discuss our personal affairs with anyone, so you must forgive me if I do not go into details. Suffice it to say that we differ as to the things we like to do and the company we like to keep. Unfortunately neither you nor I nor anyone else can change that fact."

So it went, back and forth. Beauty, of course, took not the least stock in the notion that a husband and wife were parting over questions of philosophy. If that had ever happened it was in some

part of the earth which Beauty Budd had never visited. She wrote : " Lanny, for God's sake tell me, is there another man, or is it another woman ? " To this her forever incomprehensible son replied : " There is neither man nor woman—unless you count Hitler as a man or the Statue of Liberty as a woman ! " What was a tormented mother to make out of a remark like that ?

VI

One morning while Hansi had been practising in one studio and Lanny and Bess in the other, the British home fleet had been steaming past the Cap d'Antibes on its way to the Suez Canal. It was too far out to be seen, but the newspapers told about it, and a British neighbour on the Cap was so excited that he chartered a motor-boat and took his family out to watch the spectacle. Afterwards he described it, thrilling with patriotic pride. " The British lion never bluffs ! " he announced proudly ; and Lanny, thrilled in turn, believed him and was happier than he had been for a long time. It really did seem unlikely that a huge naval machine would expend all that fuel and human energy for nothing ; and so—one of the mad dictators was going to be halted !

Mussolini had begun his glory raid upon Abyssinia, and all through the summer the diplomats had been scurrying from one capital to another, arguing, pleading, threatening, intriguing. The League of Nations had issued its solemn decrees, its committees of mediation and arbitration had laboured, but all in vain. Il Duce was determined to have his pound of dark meat, and to have the fun of slicing it himself. He had gone right on shipping his Blackshirts to Eritrea ; children whom he had trained in his Balilla to sing songs in praise of hatred and violence. In a couple of weeks more the rainy season would be over in North-east Africa, and then *il giorno di gloria* would arrive.

Lanny Budd would have had a hard time answering the question which of the two dictators he liked least ; but he had known Mussolini somewhat longer and perhaps that was enough. For a decade and a half this wretched braggart had been murdering or driving into exile the liberty-loving people of his country ; all this year he had been poisoning the air of Europe with his mouthings, so that Lanny had come to feel for him a deep and personal loathing. Stop him ! Stop him now, before it was too late ! If he could get away with this defiance of decency it would turn loose the furies of greed and hate all over Europe ; there would be no more civilization, only a pit in

which wild beasts fought and tore one another to pieces. All that was needed was for Britain to take a stand ; to close the Suez Canal to the usurper, bar him from getting oil, and he was helpless, his blatherings would die in his throat.

That would mean war, Il Duce declared ; he stuck out his jaw and his bemedalled chest—the Blessed Little Pouter Pigeon, Lanny had named him—defying all the world to come and stop him. He boasted of his thousands of planes, whereby he could and would overwhelm the British fleet. Could he do it ? Would he dare try ? Or was it simply another of his bluffs ? Men argued about it wherever they met round the shore of that sea which the dictator called the Fascists' own ; they discussed it in every chancellery and war and navy office. The air weapons were new, and who could be sure what they could do ? Sooner or later the trial would be made and the answer given—but each nation rather preferred that some other should afford the test.

On the third of October the invasion began. And so there was one question answered ; Il Duce meant it. And now, what did Britain mean ? What did Geneva mean ? The latter gave its reply four days later ; the League Council unanimously denounced Italy as the aggressor. Fine ! That looked like business ! The American observer became so excited that he couldn't stay at home and play music and read books ; he wanted to be in Paris, where there would be several editions of the newspapers every day, and parades and speeches, and shouts and perhaps riots in the smoke-filled cafés. He wanted to hear what Uncle Jesse would say about the situation ; and Blum and Longuet, and the de Bruynes, and all his other friends. He arranged for his post to be forwarded, and stepped into his car on a bright autumn morning ; in the evening he arrived in Paris and, in accord with his programme of economy, put up at a hotel of moderate price : the same where sixteen years ago his mother had hidden Kurt Meissner from the Sûreté Générale and so had got herself involved in an eight-year love affair.

VII

Lanny had seen Paris in a tumult many a time, but he thought he had never seen political passions running so high, never such confusion in people's thinking. To him it was a clear-cut issue between Right and Left, but he found that his Pink and Red friends couldn't see it that way. They hated Fascism, but also they hated war, and here their two enemies were lined up on opposite sides. Few Leftists

were able to share Lanny's enthusiasm for the British Home Fleet and they even questioned the motives of Anthony Eden. Of such hesitations the pro-Italian press took full advantage. "Do you want to die for the Negus?" was their slogan; and the French worker asked himself: Did he? Also, if France let Britain drag her into a war to save the water of Lake Tsana for the British Sudan, what would Hitler be doing in the meantime? They imagined the Führer grinning and rubbing his hands with delight over the prospect of moving into the Rhineland while French armies were busy in the Maritime Alps.

The bulk of the press of Paris and indeed of all France was on the side of Premier Laval and the other pro-Italian politicians. There was one reason, all-important but rarely mentioned: outright purchase. Here was the tragedy of France, the corruption of those organs upon which the public depended for news and ideas. If you came with enough cash in your hands you could hire the insertion not merely of news stories but of editorial opinion in nearly all the papers of Paris, and now the Italian embassy was said to have sixty million francs for the splitting of the Franco-British alliance in this crisis. Utterly sickening to read the slanders and lies in these papers, descending even to the vilest obscenities. The price of it enabled editors and proprietors to buy jewels and furs for their mistresses to display at the opera and in the cabarets.

Lanny discovered that whatever people believed they believed with fury; so it became necessary for him to take himself off and decide once more about his own role. Which way was he going to serve his cause, as a political propagandist or as a secret agent and source of funds? Certainly if he followed his present impulses and spoke out to everyone he knew, it wouldn't be long before the canine press would be snapping at his heels; also, he would make himself *persona non grata* to most of his wealthy clients. He had been so happy in the thought of being able to say what he pleased, but now a very short trial convinced him that it would prove a costly luxury for an art expert.

Zoltan Kertezsi was in Paris, ready to set a useful example to his younger associate. The genial Hungarian hated violence and tyranny, as every artist and art lover must; but he kept a bridle upon his tongue. When people expressed political opinions he listened politely, and made some mild remark to the effect that it was too bad that such questions could not be settled without passion and clamour. Somebody had to keep the altar-fires of culture alight, and he chose that role and hoped it might not be entirely futile. The passionate ones would look into that grey-moustached face with the

candid blue eyes and feel themselves gently rebuked ; they wished that they too might dwell upon those heights and breathe that cold pure air.

Lanny, always impressible, was impressed ; but when he went off by himself and thought it over, he couldn't see how love of art was going to change the fanaticism of Mussolini and Hitler, or of the Balilla and the Jugend they were training. He went out to Les Forêts, as always when he came to Paris, and in discussing the existing crisis he made the remark that these two dictators were raising up ten million little demons all of whom would have to be killed. His old friend Emily was horrified, and begged him never to let such words pass his lips again. Lanny thought it over and decided that his words were scientifically exact, but that their utterance was hardly compatible with the role of secret agent.

VIII

The long-expected letter from Trudi Schultz, was forwarded from Bienvenu. She told her patron that she now had some sketches which were worthy of his consideration, and asked him to drop her a line telling her where she could meet him, as previously. The address she gave was a post-office box in "*le treizième*," a working-class quarter of Paris. He wrote at once, naming a street corner in that neighbourhood, and an afternoon two days off, to give her time. He drove there, and it was just as in Berlin—except that the mild-looking gendarme who watched her get into the car had no swastika armband and his interest in the episode was purely sexual.

She was wearing the dark-blue dress which Lanny had taken from Irma's wardrobe, and it was somewhat large for her. She was pale and apparently thinner, and he said : " Look here, Trudi, you haven't been keeping your bargain about the milk."

" I've been working very hard," she answered.

" The job of fighting Hitler is a long-range one, I'm afraid. It's no good wearing yourself out and dying before he does. I took a lot of trouble getting you out of Germany, and I ought to have a claim on you."

" Yes, Lanny." She was a serious person, and didn't always get his playful American style. " I have something important to show you. Take me to a place where it will be safe for you to stop and read."

" It's safe anywhere," he replied. " You're out of Hitlerland, you know."

" I thought there might be somebody who knew you."

"Hardly in this part of Paris." They were passing a dingy factory building with dust-covered windows, and he drew up by the kerb. "This looks all right," he said, and she put into his hands a tiny pamphlet about four inches tall and three inches wide, containing some twenty pages of very light paper with no cover. He read the front page :

ABRAHAM LINCOLN : *Sein Leben und Seine Ideen*

and then, at the bottom of the page :

Leipzig : Deutscher Nationalsocialistischer Kulturbund

He turned to the first page of the text and began reading, in German :

"Abraham Lincoln was one of the great men of history, and his life and teachings might be of interest and service to the German people if they were truly reported and understood. Known as the Great Emancipator, he gave his life to deliver the Negro people of the North American continent from chattel slavery, and to break the political control of the landlord plutocracy over the southern states ; but the party which he founded has been taken over by the finance-capital elements in that land, which use his name and influence to maintain their pseudo-republican rule. Few realize that it was German leaders and sturdy German immigrant soldiers who won the victories of the northern armies in the American Civil War, and that the emancipation of the black slaves of that land is one of the contributions of the Teutonic-Aryan race which have been seized upon and perverted by the banker-Bolshevik dictatorship entrenched in New York and Washington."

"Holy smoke!" said Lanny. "Where did you get this rubbish?"

"Go on," commanded the other.

He obeyed ; and in the middle of the second page found himself reading as follows :

"The North American plutocratic empire is of course not the only government which pretends to serve the popular will while actually serving the interests of a wealthy clique. The Republican party of the United States is not the only case of a party which promises emancipation to the plain people whom Abraham Lincoln loved, and then proceeds to embark upon a course of militant imperialism. This is a danger which has confronted the masses throughout history, and against which they have to be continually alert. Militarism has always been the enemy of culture and true prosperity ; for wealth which is expended to make killing machinery cannot be used for constructive purposes. If a man should spend

all his resources and labour to make a bicycle, he would some day be able to ride on the roads, but would not be able to sail upon the sea. In the same way, if a nation converts all its iron and steel into rifles, guns, shells, tanks, submarines, and fighting-planes, that nation will be lacking in food, clothing, and houses. Moreover, such a nation will be driven automatically to war, because it must use what it has and cannot use what it has not. The day will come when its production is at the peak, and then the nation must act or else admit the futility of all its efforts.

"Thus it appears that a great gun, a submarine, a fighting-plane is a despot as powerful as any southern slave-owner or overseer with his whip. A staff of highly trained men is required to operate such a weapon, and others to replace them when they are killed; others to transport it, and to supply it with munitions and fuel; labourers to supply replacements for damaged parts; men to build the factories, and yet others to grow the food and make the clothing and boots for all these kinds of workers. Thus for every great implement of modern war you condemn thousands of men to unproductive labour, all their lives, and you condemn their children and grandchildren to that interest slavery which the National Socialist German Working-men's Party pledged itself in its earliest days to abolish.

"Abraham Lincoln was the friend of the common man, and in his debate over the issue of slavery he said:

"That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles, right and wrong, throughout the world. They are the two principles which have stood face to face from the beginning of time. The one is the common right of humanity, the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says: 'You toil and work and earn bread and I'll eat it.'"

"The man who spoke thus founded the Republican party of the United States of America; but to-day that party is in the hands of great bankers, industrialists, and landlords. So it is that political parties degenerate; so the common people give their devotion to a cause, and discover too late how they have been betrayed. In many countries to-day are political leaders who have solemnly pledged themselves to the abolishing of monopoly and interest slavery, but those leaders now ride on the backs of the workers, eat their bread, dwell in palaces, dress themselves in fancy uniforms, and ride about in costly motor-cars. Do you not know of such countries and such leaders?"

IX

"I begin to get the idea," said Lanny. "Very clever!"

"Read it all, if you don't mind," replied Trudi. "It is important to me."

She sat in silence while he read a detailed and well-documented indictment of the Nazi programme of ending unemployment by the piling up of national debt and spending of national surplus upon rearmament. Germany no longer made public its military budget; but other nations had ways of finding out how it had grown, and automatically they were driven to increase their armaments proportionately. So in the end you had a whole continent, in fact a whole world, engaged in a mad race, whose end must be the most frightful explosion of war in history. Abraham Lincoln had denounced militarism; and what a loss to human culture that his party should have been betrayed and should be serving as an agency of the North American plutocracy! What a tragedy that this great man of the people, this great cause to which the Germans had contributed their labour and their blood, should not be recognized as a German achievement and thus serve the glory of the Teutonic-Aryan race!

At this point Lanny perceived that he was nearing the end of the pamphlet, and that it was finishing in the orthodox Nazi tone, so that anyone glancing at the last page would get no idea of the dangerous thoughts concealed in the middle section.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Trudi, anxiously.

"It's built like a bear-trap. Who got it up?"

"I did." He glanced at her and saw a bit more colour in her cheeks.

"It seems to me a very neat idea, and it ought to set a lot of Germans to thinking. I agree with every bit of it—except the beginning and the end, of course."

"What I did was to try to remember all the things you had said on the subject of militarism and its consequences."

"Thanks for the compliment. They are none of them original ideas, but they are sound, and you have put them in simple language which a plain man can understand."

"It's my first effort at writing, and I tried hard to produce something that you would find worth while."

Lanny started his car. Safer to talk while driving. "Tell me, what have you done with this pamphlet?"

"I had a few copies printed, so that you and others could see the idea. I can change it if you find anything wrong."

"I haven't a single improvement to suggest."

"Well, then, I can have twenty thousand copies printed with the money I managed to save out of what you gave me in Salzburg."

"Including what you saved by not eating enough?" he inquired. She didn't answer, so he put that question off until later. "Have you any plan to get these distributed in Germany?"

"I have several plans. There are thousands of workers who cross the border into Germany every day, and all sorts of goods are being imported. These will be among them."

"It won't take the Gestapo long to find out where they came from, Trudi."

"They will come from different places, provided we can raise the money."

"I'll do my share," he said. "Tell me, is there such a concern as the Deutscher Nationalsozialistischer Kulturbund?"

"The concern was born and will die with this pamphlet. The next will be of different appearance, and will be printed in Amsterdam or Geneva."

"I see you have cut out a job for yourself. Do you expect to keep from being known as the source?"

"For as long as I can. So far, I have only two contacts here in Paris, and I feel sure that neither will betray me. Unfortunately, I have to expect that the French police will be helping the Germans."

"Surely so long as Laval is Premier of France," he commented.

"Even longer, Lanny. The police do not change when a government changes. The police serve the two hundred families."

X

Lanny was driving towards Versailles, and he commented: "This is the road where the market women marched out on a rainy day and dragged the King and Queen back to Paris. It wasn't so well paved in those days, or so lined with houses, and Marie Antoinette would hardly know it. Did you ever read the story of Count Fersen, the young Swedish nobleman who was her lover and who accompanied her on this march of doom?"

"I only know what was in the school-books," she replied. "They don't mention lovers."

"For my memory this route is lined with *cuirassiers* in brass helmets and plumes, guarding elderly gentlemen in top-hats and

frock-coats. They used to travel back and forth to conferences, and we subordinates speculated eagerly as to what was going on underneath the hats. Most of us were disappointed, for it turned out that President Wilson had been studying theology when he should have studied economics."

"The treaty was bad," assented Trudi, "but not half so bad as Hitler represents."

"On the day when it was signed," Lanny continued, "I was under custody in the old Conciergerie in Paris, and I heard the guns and knew what they meant. Afterwards my friends described the scene. Did you ever see the great Salle des Glaces?"

"I have never been here before."

"It's a sight that no tourist misses. May I take you?"

"Oh, Lanny! We must not dare!"

"I assure you, no one will pay the least attention to us. Hundreds of Americans go out there on bright sunny days like this."

"But some of them may know you!"

"If so, what? I am with a respectable-looking young lady, showing her the sights. She might be the daughter of one of my mother's sisters whom she left behind her in New England, close to forty years ago."

"It would start the gossips, Lanny!"

"There is no way to stop them, since my wife has removed to New York."

"She really went?"

"She did, and has sent me a polite cablegram wishing me success in life."

"Oh, Lanny, I am so bitterly sorry to have been the cause of that misfortune!"

"Let me tell you a little story—what happened in the Berghof while you were sitting out in the car and no doubt finding it a long wait."

"The time did seem long, I admit."

"It was somewhat less than two hours; and for a full hour Hitler made us a speech—just such a speech as millions of Germans have been forced to listen to over the radio, under penalty of being sent to a concentration camp. He gave us the whole story that he told first in 1919 and has stuck to ever since: the wicked Versailles *Diktat* and the treachery of the Allies under the inspiration of the Jewish-Bolshevik plutocrats. You know it only too well, I am sure."

"*Ach leider!*"

"Well, Irma listened to it for a solid hour; and when he had

finished she stepped forward and told him : ' I want you to know that I agree with every word you have said.' "

" Oh, Lanny, how dreadful ! "

" You understand, she didn't *have* to say that. Nobody asked her. It was her own spontaneous act."

" But wasn't it because of her anger with us ? "

" No doubt that caused her to speak, but it didn't determine what she said. The reason I gave up and let her go was that later, in Salzburg, she gave me her terms for the future : that I would agree to have nothing more to do with Communists and Communism, or with Socialists and Socialism. Considering that my half-sister and her husband and also my uncle are Communists, and that several of my oldest friends are Socialists, she would hardly have expected me to say yes."

" You're not going back to her, then ? "

" I'm going to see my little daughter, and I suppose I'll meet Irma ; but I don't expect to reopen the subject, and I doubt if she would let me. We've agreed not to make a scandal. What concerns you especially, she has promised not to talk about you."

" Do you think she will keep the promise ? "

" She is getting all that she asked for, and she isn't a vindictive person. She offered me money, provided I wouldn't spend it on Socialism ; but of course that's the only thing I would take it for, and she knows that."

" Don't you feel rather desolate ? "

" At times ; but no more so than you and many people we know. There just isn't any use expecting one's life to be perfect in a time like this."

XI

They wandered through the beautiful park of Versailles, once the playground of the Grand Monarque and his successors, and for a long time one of the world's tourist attractions. In the Petit Trianon they inspected the chapel in which Marie Antoinette had prayed and the harpsichord upon which she had played accompaniments for Fersen's flute. They strolled about the grounds, observing the Belvidere and the Orangerie, the Jeu de Bague and the Temple d'Amour. At the garden front Lanny remarked : " There is a report widely current that if you come here on the tenth of August, and happen to be what is called psychic, you may see Marie Antoinette sitting outside here, wearing a wide flapping hat and a pink dress ; also you will see many of the people of her time, moving about the place in costume."

Trudi smiled and replied : " Perhaps there was once a motion-picture company here on that date."

" The tenth of August is the date of the sacking of the Tuileries in Paris, which was, of course, a dreadful experience for poor Toinette. Perhaps she comes here to escape the painful memories."

Farther on was the little lake and stream, and at one of the rustic bridges Lanny stopped. " Here is a spot which played a part in an experience which you may take as a ghost story, not trying to believe it. In my library is a volume called *An Adventure*, written by two respectable English ladies, college-teachers and daughters of clergymen, who came here at the beginning of the century and strolled about these grounds, moved by idle curiosity like you and me. It happened to be the tenth of August, though that date meant nothing to them. They had never been interested in psychic matters and had no idea of what was coming. They had what I suppose one might call a collective hallucination ; they saw the people of the *ancien régime* and were spoken to by several of them. Everything seemed strange, but they didn't know what it meant ; only afterwards, when they began to compare notes, they realized that one had seen things which the other was certain had not been there. They began looking up old data and discovered that they had seen the grounds as they had been a century and a half earlier, but were not at the time of their visit."

" You take that sort of thing seriously, don't you, Lanny ? "

" Much against my inclinations, I have been forced to. It has occurred to me as a possibility that time may not be the fixed and permanent system which it seems to us, but may be a product of our own minds, a form which we impose upon our experiences."

Trudi had no comment, and they strolled on. Presently Lanny remarked : " You asked me if I could manage to get you a séance with our Polish medium."

" Oh, yes," she replied. " Is she still with you ? "

" She is visiting Zaharoff at his château near here. It wouldn't do to take you there, but I could bring Madame to some hotel and have her take a room, and then bring you to her. It would be better if I were not present, because I have managed to get her ' spirit control ' irritated with me because of my sceptical questions. You see, I please neither side ; the Marxists think I am a fool and a dupe and the spirits think I am irreverent."

" I'll try to be open-minded," said this Marxist ; " but I can't promise to be convinced."

" I would be foolish indeed to ask such a promise. All that you

must agree to is to accept my word that I shall not give Madame the faintest hint about your identity."

"I'll certainly believe that, Lanny."

"Also," he added, "I'm hoping that you'll let me see something of you when I happen to be in Paris. I'm quite sure I'm not being followed, and you can easily make sure about yourself. We can meet at that corner as we did to-day, and I can drive you to some different part of France where nobody will have the slightest interest in us. You can't work all the time, and if you try to, your work will suffer. At least I can do what I'm hoping to do this evening, find some quiet *auberge* and see that you get one substantial meal. Will your conscience permit that much self-indulgence?"

"Lanny," she said, "I'm not an ascetic; it's just that when I think of what is happening to our comrades, my food chokes me."

"I know, my dear; I've had the feeling many a time. But here we are, in this old tormented Europe, and there's never been an hour since I was born when I couldn't have starved myself for that reason. I suddenly became aware of it at the end of July 1914. That early in my life I had to work out a philosophy that would permit me to eat and sleep and even play music. Cruelty and suffering aren't going to be ended in our lifetime, and it's the part of wisdom to make a rule never to expend more energy in one day than you can restore in one night. So now let us go and find our *auberge*, and I'll tell you how you have to behave with Madame Zyszynski if you hope to get any significant results."

15

Need a Body Cry?

I

BEAUTY BUDD couldn't stand the suspense any longer. She telegraphed that she was coming, and next morning here she was; putting up at her son's hotel, full of strange memories for her, and hardly stopping to take off hat and coat before going to work on him. "Now, Lanny, do for God's sake tell me what has happened!"

He had rehearsed this scene in his mind; knowing her so thoroughly, he had been able to say everything for her as well as for himself. Now, patiently and kindly, he told her that he and Irma had been discovering how they were irritated by each other's opinions

and bored by each other's friends; they had finally decided there was no sense standing it.

"Tell me this," she persisted, "just what did you do to Irma in Germany?"

"Nothing different from anywhere else. It's the same old story. I wanted to meet my friends there——"

"Men friends or women?"

He had anticipated this, and prepared a humorous reply. "There have to be both, in order that there may be more."

"Don't be silly. I can't believe that Irma is interested in any other man; I know it must be some woman, somewhere. Tell me, is it that young German artist whose work you, were so interested in?"

He was surprised by this; he hadn't imagined that she was keeping a note-book on his doings. But Beauty Budd was like that. Nobody was going to persuade her that any man was interested in any woman's sketches, any more than in any woman's poetry or music or ideas or whatever it might be. Women existed for one purpose so far as men were concerned, and every woman knew it in her heart, no matter how hard she might try to fool herself.

Lanny had to make up his mind in a small fraction of a second. He said rather severely: "I'm sorry, dear. If you want to take that line, I'm not going to discuss it. I think you might leave it to somebody else to start the scandals on us."

Tears began creeping into her eyes, as he knew they would sooner or later. She would have to have a good cry before this was over, and it was better while they were alone and she didn't have to worry about her make-up.

"I know how bitterly disappointing it must be to you," he continued more gently. "You just have to make up your mind that this is one of the things you can't help. Irma and I know our own minds, and we've taken the trouble to think it out thoroughly. She is going to live at Shore Acres, and I'm going to live here and there, as in the past. We've agreed that we're not going to have any sort of fuss, and in this I expect to receive the co-operation of my mother. When people ask about it, just say that she seems to like Long Island and I seem to like Europe, and that's that."

"Lanny, there'll be some other man, and you'll lose her."

"I hope that whoever he is, he'll be able to make her happy. I have made up my mind that there is small possibility of happiness in love where people differ in their fundamental beliefs as completely as Irma and I do."

"You're definitely giving her up, then?"

"It was she who gave me up, and I'm accepting her decision because I have to."

"And you don't mean to see her again?"

"I shall probably see her, because she is the mother of my child, and I certainly don't intend to give up the child."

"And what about my grandchild?"

"Irma has been your friend and there is no reason why she should cease to be. Go there whenever you want to, and she will treat you as you treated her when she was your guest. The place is huge, and nobody need be in any other's way. Play bridge with Fanny Barnes, and don't object if she cheats you a little; Irma will make it up with a handsome cheque now and then, and everything will be all right."

H

Poor soul! She tried to lecture her son on the holy bonds of matrimony, but it was rather late in both their lives; he soon kidded her out of it and forced her to talk about facts. It would be, she argued, a perfectly frightful blow to the family prestige—his, hers, and especially Marceline's. Right now, of all times; such a cruel thing to do to a young girl just ready for the marriage market! Beauty had been planning, with the abettal of Emily and her other smart friends, to give her a grand début at Bienvenu at the beginning of the season in January. But now, of course, it would be a farce. Nothing could save them socially; they would be plunged from the top of the scale to third-rate or lower.

"Listen, old girl," he said, "be sensible and write Irma a nice letter. Tell her how sorry you are and that you want to be friends. Explain how a scandal will hurt Marceline's chances, and suggest that she give her a party at Shore Acres to show that everything is all right. Irma will understand without your dotting the *i*'s and crossing the *t*'s, and I'm sure she'll be glad to do it."

"But, Lanny, I don't want to have Marceline marry in America. I want her to marry here and live at Bienvenu, so that I won't be so lonely."

"Has she definitely broken with Alf?"

"They quarrel half the time, and spend the other half making up. It seems to me it would be a very silly match, because Alf has to spend the next four years in college, and he has no income. Marceline will be eighteen this month, and she ought to marry some older man who can give her what she needs now."

"What you have taught her to need," he was tempted to say;

but that would have been unkind—and useless, since he couldn't change his half-sister. "Listen, Beauty," he said, "we have to take what we can get in this world and no good crying for the moon. It seems to me your husband is the person to give you advice at this stage in your life. You have talked about spirituality, and what's the matter with your applying a little of it right now?"

"Oh, Lanny," she wept, "what's the good of your telling me such things? You know you don't believe a word of them."

"That shows how little you understand your son," he replied. "Parsifal knows better, I am sure. He has his faith and I have mine and each of us works at it. I don't think that to stop wage-slavery and war, to stop human beings from robbing and killing one another, is exactly a trivial ideal, either in your sight or in that of your Creator. Incidentally, I think my mother has been a very well-preserved lady all her life. You have a lot to be grateful for, and it's the part of wisdom to learn to be happy with it instead of tormenting yourself because you're losing things that you really haven't any use for."

That stern talk frightened her a little, and she tried to dry her eyes. "Lanny, I'm only thinking about my children's happiness!"

"Well, if that is so, understand where my happiness lies. I'm not entirely joyful over losing the wife I love; but I have my faith that I live by, and I don't intend to give it up in order to be kept in a palace and be stared at as a Prince Fortunatus."

"Lanny, you do such dreadful things, and frighten us women half out of our wits."

"I'm sorry about that, dear; but I didn't make the profit system and I didn't make war."

She was staring at him through her tears, which wouldn't stop coming. "Lanny," she burst out suddenly, "you haven't really been making love to any other woman, have you?"

"Indeed I have not."

"And Irma knows that you haven't?"

"She knows it well."

"Then I'll tell you what I really think. She's a cold-hearted and selfish woman, and what she's doing is shocking and inexcusable!"

He couldn't help laughing. "Well, darling, don't take it as your duty to tell her. It is no part of my plan to turn you into a social uplifter. Just remember that Irma is the mother of your granddaughter, and that, right or wrong, she's the boss. So, whatever happens, keep on friendly terms with her."

"When are you going to see her?"

"I haven't any definite plans."

"You're not going to ask her to come back to you?"

"Not on her terms. How can I?"

"Remember her pride, Lanny, and give her a little the best of it. Women nearly always get the worst, you know."

"I'll tell her I'm sorry, of course. I said it in a cable, but she didn't see fit to take note of it."

"Don't wait too long, dear. Remember what swarms of men will be after her money!"

III

He drove his mother out to Les Forêts, so that she might talk things over with Emily, and find out if Emily had managed to worm any more out of him than his mother had. (She hadn't.)

When Lanny got back to his hotel there was a cablegram from Robbie, saying that he was sailing that night for Cherbourg, and Lanny wondered if that was a conspiracy with his mother, or an overture from his wife, or both, or neither. It was possible, of course, that Robbie was coming on business; he had got his factory going, and his planes were diving and swooping over the field he had built by the banks of the Newcastle River. They were equalling the promised performances, and Robbie was exulting, but also fuming because of the red tape of the bureaucrats and the dumbness of the brass-hats. What did they imagine a fabricating-plant was going to do with its time and labour while they were fussing over commas in contracts and insisting that demonstrations already made should be repeated for some new board? Robbie had been fussing about things like that ever since Lanny had known him. And now it was to be expected that he would be coming to try the French markets, making use of his personal influence and that of his stockholders in France. Especially in view of the new crisis, and the possibility that Mussolini might really have the air superiority of which he was boasting.

Meeting Robbie wouldn't be such a strain as meeting Beauty, for Robbie was a sensible man and ideas counted with him as they never could with his one-time *amie*. Moreover, Robbie would have had a talk with Irma, and Lanny was curious to hear about that. While waiting, he talked picture business with Zoltan, and they looked at masters old and new and wrote letters to clients. Lanny decided to go shares with Zoltan on the rest of the Göring collection, for Zoltan had many clients of his own and could work at art while Lanny was working at changing the world.

He decided to get the meeting with Zyszynski out of the way, so

he phoned the Château de Balincourt and arranged to call for her in the mid-morning two days later. Then he wrote a note to "Kornmahler," telling her that the medium would be at a certain cheap hotel in "*le treizième*" at a certain hour. Lanny would wait in his car across the street from the hotel and would instruct Madame that after the séance she was to go and get her lunch and attend a cinema, thus giving Trudi time to join Lanny and report results.

So Lanny motored into Seine-et-Oise on a rainy and chilly November morning and picked up the old woman—incidentally being told by the butler that the master would be pleased to see him on his return. Poor old Knight Commander, sitting there in his castle waiting for the grim reaper to come and cut him down, and dreaming meanwhile of the woman he had loved and trusted; yearning for any word about her, any faintest perfume of her presence! Come and tell me what happens at the séance, Lanny!

On the way into Paris that dull old woman had her hour of happiness with the adopted son of her fancy. With other people she was content to be silent, but to him she talked about the Hindu servants and what strange men they were and how hard to talk to. She told about her childhood in Poland, where she had lived in a peasant hut and had once raised a calf which her parents had given to her; she had called it Kooba, and everything about it was as real and dear to her as Zaharoff's duquesa to him. If somebody had told her that Tecumseh had brought a message from the spirit Kooba, nothing would have brought the old woman more happiness.

Lanny told her how she was to spend her day, and gave her money to pay for her hotel room, also a pack of cards so that she could play Patience in case the visitor might be late. The visitor's name was Mademoiselle Kornmahler, and Lanny had already instructed her how to behave: to speak no unnecessary word until the medium was in her trance, and after that to treat the Amerindian chieftain with the greatest respect, answer his questions promptly and truthfully, but tell him no more than necessary; to wait until Madame was out of her trance before moving, and then to thank her politely, tell her that all had gone well, and leave without unnecessary conversation.

IV

He deposited his charge and parked across the street a little way down the block. He sat and read some of Richet's *Thirty Years of Psychological Research*, which he was going to lend to Trudi. He never minded waiting, because he always had something to read in his car. After an hour or more, Trudi appeared suddenly and slid into the

seat beside him ; he dropped the book, started the engine, and said : " Well, how was it ? "

" I didn't hear from Ludi," were her first words.

" Too bad ! " he replied. " That's the way it goes."

" But I heard many other things. Lanny, it is a most uncanny experience ! "

" You bet it is ! Tell me everything."

" Well, first he said there was my mother. She was tall, had grey hair, and wore black ; that is all true, because my father was killed in the war. But you see, Lanny, I am fairly tall, and so it is reasonable to guess that my mother might have been."

" Did she give her name ? "

" Tecumseh said it sounded like Greta. She was called Gretchen."

" A very common name," commented Lanny, who knew how to deal with newcomers to this strange field ; " so you might call that a guess, too. Did she give any message ? "

" She wanted me to know that she was well and happy. Of course I'd be much pleased to know that my mother is well and happy anywhere—if I knew it was my mother."

" And then what ? "

" Then a strange thing : I was told that there was a large, heavy-set man who said his name was Gregor. I said I had once had a teacher by that name ; but it wasn't he. He said he had a message for Otto, but I didn't know any Otto."

" What was the message ? "

" I was to tell him that Gregor was working with him, and that the despot would be overthrown in time—but a long time."

" That didn't mean anything to you ? "

" I thought of Gregor Strasser and his brother, who founded the Black Front against Hitler. You know about them, no doubt."

" I once came very close to Gregor. I was in the room with him when Hitler gave him a fearful dressing down in Hitler's apartment in Berlin. I had such a good chance to study him that I've always felt I knew him. Also I heard him make a speech at a *Versammlung* in Stuttgart. When he was murdered in the blood purge I was in Stadelheim Prison, and afterwards I got a message about it—but that was in a normal way. Since Gregor Strasser occupies a prominent place in my mind, perhaps the message was meant for me."

" Do you know where Otto is ? "

" I haven't an idea, though I've heard he is somewhere in Europe, working against the Nazis. For my part I wouldn't be interested, for I wouldn't trust any man who had ever been one of them."

"I agree with you," said Trudi. "But it is extraordinary that this old woman should know about the Strassers."

"She doesn't," declared Lanny. "I'd wager all I own on that. She has no mind for any political affairs. While I was driving her here she told me all about a calf she raised as a child; what the calf ate, the noises it made, and the strange feeling she had when she dipped her fingers in a pail of milk and let the calf suck them . . . Go on; what else?"

"There was an old man who said he was your grandfather."

"He haunts all my séances. He was very angry now, I suppose."

"He was; he said he wished you to know that you are breaking the laws of man as well as of God. He commands you to return to your wife."

"I don't know any law that obliges me to live with my wife when she won't have me. You see, the old gentleman wanted Irma and me to have babies, and he cross-examined us about it in plain biblical language before he died."

"Do you think it is really your grandfather now, Lanny?"

"I don't know what the devil it is. I know that Zyszynski doesn't know anything about my grandfather, and nothing about my being parted from Irma, because she's been at Balincourt for several months. Anybody else?"

"There was a Lady somebody—Ladybird?"

"That is quite cute," said Lanny. "I'm sorry I never thought of it while she was alive. That is Lady Caillard, called Birdie."

"That is the name."

"She comes frequently. She talks to Zaharoff, and tells him she is in heaven."

"There was a message for Zaharoff, from his wife. She is watching and waiting for him, and he will come soon. That is not such a pleasant message, is it?"

"It will be for him. He would go gladly if he were sure that she was there. He has little reason to love this world, so far as I know his life."

v

That completed the list of the spirit visitors—a strange assortment. Lanny took his friend back over the various episodes and she added details under his questioning. He wished he might have been there, taking notes. "Madame knows that you are associated with me," he said; "so that might account for the messages to me and about me. But it doesn't account for her knowing that Irma and I are separated, or about my special interest in the Strassers."

"On the other hand," countered Trudi, "suppose we call it spirits, did Gregor Strasser know who you were when he got his scolding from Hitler?"

"It is possible that he may have asked someone of the household about the strange young man who had witnessed his humiliation; or again, it might be that spirits know more than they knew when they were people. But what my mind always comes back to is the idea of telepathy. There was nothing in any of these communications which wasn't in either your mind or mine."

She reflected. "It might be hard to say how there could be a communication which mightn't have been known to somebody."

"Quite so. Take the famous case of Glastonbury Abbey, which is in the psychic research books; the communicators were supposed to be long-dead monks, and they told secrets about the architecture of the long-buried ruins. Excavations proved the statements correct. But who can be sure there may not exist some records of those old days, and that some scholar might not have happened to be studying them at the time?"

"Has anybody ever succeeded in working out an answer to that?"

"It can be done with what you might call artificial facts. Suppose, for example, I cut a small slot in a piece of paper, and thrust that paper between the pages of a book at random. It is obvious that when I open the book, certain words or letters will be visible through the slot; but until the book is opened, nobody knows what those words or letters are. Now seal up the book and lock it in a safe, and let people in New York and Australia consult mediums and see if they can find out what will show through the slot."

"Has anything like that ever been done?"

"The records of the British Society for Psychical Research are full of all kinds of experiments along that line; but the trouble is, nobody except members of the society ever reads them. The average scientist just knows it couldn't happen, and therefore it didn't, and that settles it. If you find that it does happen, right away you become a crank like the others, and your testimony has no value."

VI

He turned Trudi loose on the street with the Richet book under her arm, and drove to the hotel and took Madame back to the château. It wasn't often that Zaharoff asked to see anyone, but he had asked for Lanny Budd, and so the art expert went into the

library with the big blazing fire and told the retired munitions king of Europe that another message had come from the duquesa, given to a woman friend whom Lanny did not name. He could have made a hit with the old man by bringing or sending such messages frequently; but he played the game honestly, and wondered if Sir Basil appreciated the fact. Probably he trusted Lanny as much as he trusted anybody in the world. He could never get away from the thought that this agile-minded young American was the son of a business man, and must be expected to be helping his father play the game. Nobody knew this game better than the Knight Commander, and when others tried it on him he watched with a sad heart.

There he sat, warming his aching old bones by a fire of wood from his grand old forests; keeping his false teeth clamped firmly together, so that the visitor might not see or hear the shaking of his jaw; keeping his hands firmly upon his knees so that the visitor might not see their trembling. In those old hands he still held a vast fortune, the extent of it known only to himself. Dominant in his mind was the certainty that these hands were soon going to fall lifeless, and the fortune be left for others to dissipate.

This castle had once belonged to a very old king with a white beard like Zaharoff's; then it had belonged to the king's mistress, whom he had followed on the street and bought through an agent like any other *objet d'art*. Who would live in it next, and sit before the fire and tell tales about a shrewd Greek ex-fireman and guide to brothels who had acquired the mastery of most of the great munitions plants of Europe and had sold impartially to all nations the means of mutual suicide? Would the Greek know what they were saying about him? Lies, mostly—but the truth had been worse, if they had known it! Would it trouble him what they said? Would he tremble inside, and feel his blood pressure mount, as happened now whenever he came upon the most harmless item about himself in that press of Paris which he had bought so freely in the past? Or would he be sitting in some lovely garden, looking at the duquesa's tulips, knowing the different varieties and observing nature's odd inculcable whims?

Here came this smooth-spoken young man who had known the duquesa and admired her, spoke of her kindly, and brought rare messages from her; what did that mean? Impossible to believe that he really cared for a slowly dying old man! Was he really interested in psychic research? Or was he merely helping his father to get contracts? He had a rich wife himself; but then, who ever has enough money? Was he perchance wondering if an old friend

would remember him in his will ? That is the supreme tragedy of the aged rich. Who ever comes near them that is not thinking that ghoulish thought ? Who could tolerate their infirmities, their indecencies, except that he or she is taking a gambler's chance at a fortune—the cheapest and easiest chance ? To hell with you, hyenas all, you shan't have a sou of it !

VII

The march into Abyssinia continued, and the diplomatic duel went on in the secret chambers. Lanny had been buoyed up with hope, but not for long after he got to Paris, for all the "insiders" agreed that nobody was going to call Il Duce's bluff. The League had imposed "sanctions" of a very mild character—not enough to stop the Italians, just enough to infuriate them and cause them to burn Anthony Eden in effigy. The British tried to lay the blame on the French refusal to support a policy of action ; this infuriated the French, who had known as early as September that the British were unwilling to close the Suez Canal or to shut off the oil supplies, the only two measures which might have been effective. So Denis de Bruyne told Lanny, having got it direct from Pierre Laval.

Recriminations everywhere the diplomats met ; Rick called it a thieves' kitchen. They were all imperialists, he declared, all in a squabble over dividing the loot. British general elections were due in a few days, and Rick was campaigning against the government candidates, so he could only write briefly. "The Tories have to pretend to support the League ; and the day after the elections they will cut the League's throat. They are even allowing the Italians to carry poison gas through the Suez ; gas so declared for transit fees, mind you !"

There was that magnificent fleet waiting at Alexandria ; two, in fact, the home fleet and the Mediterranean. In Lanny's ears rang the proud boast : "The British lion never bluffs !" But Rick said the statesmen were shivering at the thought of a mad dictator sending his bombing-planes, his submarines, and swarms of tiny sea-sledges on some dark night, and next morning there would be no British lion. There were even rumours that the fleet had been sent without sufficient ammunition—and how could you know what to believe ?

In the midst of this long drawn-out crisis Robbie Budd and his right hand, Johannes Robin, arrived in Paris. It was harvest time for them ; Robbie, having foreseen it, had his harvesting machinery well greased and its engines warmed. He had shipped one of his

new fighter planes, the Budd-Erling P7, on board a freighter, and with it came a crew ready to uncrate and assemble it; also a test-pilot who was going to put the marvel through its paces for the French government, and fly it to England and repeat the performance. The French were a penurious people, Robbie said, and would hate like sin to pay cash for planes which they might hope to reproduce in a year or two; but in this game of air-fighting you didn't use what you might have next year, but what you had to-day. Robbie carried a threat to every war office, that if they didn't get the Budd-Erling P7 the next country would.

A man of great affairs couldn't afford to put up at the second-class hotel where Lanny and Beauty were staying. He and his man Friday had to be at the Crillon, and the mother and son came over to lunch with them and found them so full of business that they hardly had time to tell the news from home. Robbie wasn't going to waste time with subordinates, but ask de Bruyne to bring him together with the French Premier. Beauty said: "I think I could arrange it so that you would meet him socially." She explained that at one of Irma's receptions she had met a titled French lady who was the mistress of one of Laval's closest associates; she offered to see this lady and arrange to have her give a dinner at her home, where Robbie might meet two or three of the key men of the French government and have a chance to talk to them while they were feeling mellow.

"What will she expect?" Robbie asked, and Beauty said: "Not very much, I should think; say, five thousand francs."

"All right," said the man of affairs. "See what you can do; but I'll have to know to-day, because this crisis may soon be over."

VIII

It was like the old days which Lanny remembered so vividly, when the World War had hit them and he had to become his father's secretary at the age of fourteen. Now Robbie had brought a secretary with him, one who knew French well. Lanny sat and watched the master of affairs read cablegrams, dictate answers, and talk over the phone with important persons. It was late in the afternoon before he said: "Now, son, we'll have time for ourselves. How about a bit of fresh air?"

"Fine!" replied the son. "Walk or drive?"

"Walk, if you're equal to it," said the father—joking, for he was trying to take off weight and not succeeding any too well. They

strolled on the great Place de la Concorde, where Lanny had seen the soldiers bivouacked in war days, the captured German cannon parked in peace-making days, and mobs, Communist or Fascist, combating the gendarmes on several occasions. The hotel suite which had been assigned to his father was the one on whose balcony a maidservant had been shot while watching the rioting less than two years ago. The bitterness of that night of battle was still poisoning the public life of France.

"Well, son," began Robbie, "I've had several talks with Irma, and I needn't say what a sad affair it seems to me."

"She told you the whole story?"

"She says she did; but of course I want to hear your side."

"I really haven't much of a side, Robbie. Irma and I disagree in our ideas, and it makes her unhappy; she wants me to give up my ideas, and I can't. That's about all there is to it."

"Your ideas mean more to you than your wife and child?"

"They mean more to me than anything else, including life."

"That's serious talk, Lanny. You must realize that going up against a bunch of people like the Nazis is no child's play, and it doesn't leave a man's wife much chance of happiness."

"I realize that fully, and I'm not blaming Irma, either publicly or in my heart. It's just her hard luck that she didn't realize what she was taking on. I explained it to her before I asked her to marry me, but she was young and it just didn't register."

"Do you still love her?"

"Of course I love her; but how can there be love when there is no harmony of mind? I know I've made her unhappy in the past and will make her still more unhappy in the future. So what's the use of fooling with it?"

"You're not going to make any attempt at a reconciliation?"

"How can I, when she laid down the law to me that I had to break with all my friends?"

"She was angry when she said that, and I don't think she would expect to stand by it literally."

"Did she tell you that?"

"She said as much."

"Well, why doesn't she say it to me?"

"She told me she had written to you."

"Yes, but nothing like that. She wrote the news about Frances and assured me that she wished me all happiness."

"I think you ought to go and see her, Lanny, and talk the thing out fairly and frankly."

"I know, that sounds reasonable, but it's because you don't

realize how much talking we've already done. We just don't agree about any of the things that I really care about. You know how it is with you and me—we argue, but you have a sense of humour, and we kid each other and manage to get along. But Irma has no humour, at least not where her intellectual prestige is concerned; she thinks I think she's dumb about politics and economics, and I do, and so she gets her feelings hurt, and I can't help it. It's just a damn bore, not being able to say what you think and have the other fellow stand the gaff. Take Uncle Jesse; I can fight with him and he gives me as good as he gets and that's the end of it. But with Irma—good Lord, it's like running a newspaper under censorship. I have to accumulate a long list of topics I must never mention in her presence; I have to bite my tongue off a dozen times a day. I can't tell you what a relief it's been to be able to go anywhere and meet anybody and not feel that I've committed a crime."

Robbie was a tactful man, and had known this unusual son for a long time. "I think you ought to go, Lanny," he said. "You don't want Frances to forget you entirely."

"Of course not. I'm planning to see Frances before long; but I don't see what Irma and I can say that we haven't said too many times already."

IX

Robbie wanted to know about the international situation, so urgently important to him, and Lanny told him what he had been able to pick up in Paris. The barefooted black soldiers of the Negus were putting up a tough fight for their freedom, and some of Lanny's Leftist friends were cherishing the hope that in their wild mountainous country they might be able to wear down the invaders. Robbie said: "Poor niggers, they don't realize what has happened since the time of Adowa. Believe me, son, the aeroplane has changed the world, and a nation or people that loses command of the air might just as well quit and save what it can."

Lanny had heard his father make confident assertions about public events, and his score was far from perfect. "You have something to sell!" he answered, with a grin, and the father replied: "You bet your bottom dollar!"

Robbie was still more confident after he had had his dinner with the *fripou mongol* and other key Frenchmen. He told his son that the Abyssinian goose was already cooked and ready for carving. "Britain and France are going to compromise," he declared. "They understand clearly that they can't afford to see Mussolini licked. It

would be a defeat for the white race ; there'd be a revolution in Italy, and the Communists would take over the country."

There it was again : Fascism as a bulwark against the Reds ! A Communist revolution would be a calamity, while a Fascist counter-revolution might be a necessity ! Robbie said that the French army generals would refuse to fight Italy ; they would rather turn the politicians out. Lanny had heard it before and knew it was the regular Fascist talk. Who could say if it was true ?

He didn't want to argue with his father any more than with his wife. It was his role to ask questions and get information to be passed on to his Pink friends. So now he learned that while the League members in Geneva were being stalled in their programme of applying sanctions to oil, the French Premier and the British Foreign Secretary were working out a plan to give Mussolini most of what he was out to grab. The prospect disturbed an American merchant of death and he remarked : " I have to get busy and get some contracts signed before this whole thing blows over ! "

They went out to the Villacoublay flying-field just south of Paris to witness the tests of the Budd-Erling P7. Robbie went in a fancy staff car with magnificoes wearing loads of gold braid, and Lanny drove his mother, also the titled French lady who had been paid five thousand francs (above two hundred dollars) for a dinner. A fascinating and at the same time a terrifying thing to watch that man-made bird wheeling and darting in the sky, more rapidly than any creature had ever moved on land, sea, or air up to that moment, To see it mount out of sight, and then come rushing down with the throttle wide open and the motor roaring—down, down, until you caught your breath, certain that it must be too late and that the man inside must be dead ; levelling off at the very last instant and sweeping like a hurricane across the field. The test-pilot was helped out of the plane with blood running from his mouth and nose, and it was rather horrible, but it was war. The American Navy had invented this new method of attack, and it was said that the Germans and Italians had both taken it up and were going to win wars with it. " Is France going to lose wars without it ? " asked the president of Budd-Erling, addressing officers of the French Air Force.

X

Robbie left Johannes in Paris and set out for London ; Beauty went along to help with her social arts, and Lanny motored them—it was like a family reunion. Lanny wanted to see Rick and tell him

about Irma, also to consult with him as to what a grown-up playboy might do to keep the Nazi-Fascists from getting control of Europe.

He stayed a week-end at The Reaches, and it was like being at home. He had spent so many of his happiest hours here, and this leftist writer represented the wisest and sanest influence in his life. Rick had just been through a hard spell of electioneering; it had meant travelling here and there addressing audiences, for the most part of working people in obscure halls. Rick had poured his soul into the task of making them realize the need of scotching the Fascist serpent before it had grown to man-killing size. It had been an unpaid, and as the event proved, a futile labour. Because of the division among the opposition forces, the Tories had got nearly two-thirds of the seats with less than half the total votes, and so the betrayal of the people's hopes would go on. Rick's face was lined, and his hair was showing traces of premature grey at the sides; he took the election results as a personal tragedy, and suffered calamities which had not yet befallen but which his clear mind saw on the way.

They strolled outside in the garden, and Lanny told the news he had gathered in Paris, of the secret negotiations between Laval and the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare. Rick said his father had heard rumours of the deal, supposed to be the gravest of state secrets; now he learned just which provinces the "poor niggers" were going to surrender to Il Duce, and how the rest were to be governed by an Italian "adviser." Rick said: "That's the damndest sell-out of public opinion in the history of this country!" When he learned how sure Lanny was of having it right, he added: "How would it do for me to tip off some news chaps about it?"

"Exactly what I was hoping," replied the American. The playboy thought for a while and said: "I met a New York journalist the other day; if the story came from there it could never be traced to you. Suppose I ride up to town with you in the morning and attend to it?"

Lanny told about his domestic problem. The advice he got wouldn't have pleased his father and mother, for Rick had never liked the match and had been afraid that it would cost him a friend. He said that a fortune such as Irma Barnes's represented an accumulation of social crimes and was a corrupting force which very few could withstand, certainly not an amiable and pliable art lover. He said: "Stay away from Irma till the wound has healed; let her find another man, or you find another woman, somebody who believes what you believe and will encourage what you want to do." Lanny's mind told him that this was wise advice; but there was something in him that winced when his friend added: "I wouldn't

be surprised if she hit it off with Caddy Wickthorpe. It would be an admirable match from the point of view of both of them."

The code of the smart intellectuals required Lanny to take this lightly. "My mother has been trying to hint that to me for a year or two," he remarked. "Have you seen any signs of it?"

"They wouldn't let you see any signs," declared Rick; "but you can trust Beauty's insight in matters of that sort. Caddy is having the devil's own time to keep going in the face of rising taxes, and the Barnes fortune would be a windfall to him. Irma would modernize the castle and make the grandest countess in the realm. Your job might be to persuade Augustus John or Gerald Brockhurst to paint her portrait."

"I have thought of both," said Lanny, with a smile. "But are they quite up to it?"

"They might rise to the occasion. And as for her ennoblement, just keep out of the way and leave it to economic determinism!"

The anti-Nazi conspirator wasn't at liberty to give any hint concerning his associate in Paris. All he said was: "I am doing something for the cause which I'm pledged not to mention; but I want you to know that I'm not just playing round."

"Good for you, old top!" replied the Englishman. He put his arm about Lanny and gave him a squeeze, a form of demonstration he did not often permit himself.

XI

Lanny went back to London and appeared in the smart world with his smart mother. This return to the period of apron-strings of course did not fail to excite comment. Three months had passed since the parting of the heiress and her prince consort, and the event had been noticed in those newspaper columns which occupy themselves with the doings of the rich. The brilliant young ladies and gentlemen whose business it was to flit from flower to flower and collect the honey of gossip came to Lanny with sly and insinuating questions; they expected him to answer in the same tone, and he did so. "My wife has her reasons for wishing to be at home for the present. I am here on picture business, and am planning to leave for New York before long." He would say it with a grin, and add: "Nothing more." Cablegrams would be shot to New York, asking about storks on the extensive red-tiled roofs of Shore Acres. Telephone calls would come to the estate, and Irma would be furious. Lanny, who hadn't said a word but the truth, thought he was entitled to have a few smiles out of his misfortunes.

There was going to be a grand evening reception and dance at the town house of Margy Petries, to mark the coming out of Marceline Detaze, just eighteen, and one of the loveliest young creatures your eyes ever fell upon. Her mother had decided that a London debut would be distinguished, and it had better come before the scandal broke. Here Beauty was in her element, working two rackets at the same time, selling aeroplanes and a daughter; there was no conflict between the efforts, for the same man might elect to buy both, and it would all be in the family.

From the mother's aspect, manner, and conversation you would never have guessed that there was anything "spiritual" about her; but upstairs in a room of this ample dwelling, full of historic memories, a retired real-estate salesman from a small town in Iowa sat for hours at a time in front of his fireplace with his eyes closed. He was doing what he called praying, a form of mental exercise which consisted in fixing his mind upon images of the good, the true, and the beautiful, to the exclusion of a world full of the bad, the false, and the ugly. The method must be working, for whenever Beauty entered that room she came out with a light of hope in her eyes and feelings of love in her heart. Was it not love of Marceline which prompted her to find the child a proper husband? Was it not love of Robbie and the other stockholders, including Margy, her hostess, which prompted her to try to sell fighter planes to the British who apparently needed them so badly? Truly, it would be terrible if the British home and Mediterranean fleets were to be destroyed; what then would protect this beautiful old town house, and the spreading country estate, and all the other charming places where Beauty Budd had been having good times for more than thirty years—ever since Petries' Fearless had become Eversham-Watson and had brought her here and introduced her as the ex-wife of Budd Gunmakers?

A touching and pathetic thing to see Marcell's daughter at this great moment of her life; a lovely frail butterfly just emerged from her chrysalis, waving her wings in the sun and preparing to take flight into the wide world. A wonderful rose-pink toilet had been got ready and Lanny was privileged to see it in advance. No use trying for the serious talk which he had been preparing in his mind; he could get time for only a few words: "Are you going to break off with Alf, dear?"

"Oh, Lanny, he's so fussy! He quarrels with everything I do. He thinks I'm nothing but a silly."

"Well, are you?" he wanted to say; but it might have spoiled the party. "Have you invited him?"

"Of course. I wrote him a nice note, even though he was an old bear the last time I saw him. I suppose he'll come, if his very important studies permit; but I don't believe he'll enjoy it, because he thinks that parties are frivolous and that I ought to be learning nursing or something."

"Well" said Lanny, "he thinks there'll be another war, and he expects to be an aviator, so he may need to be nursed."

"Oh, Lanny, you think of such depressing things! I believe you taught them to him!"

XII

Beauty found time for a word of warning to this wayward son of hers. One of the persons he might meet at this affair was Rosemary Codwilliger, pronounced Culliver, only you didn't have to pronounce it since she had become the Countess of Sandhaven. Lanny said: "Rick told me she was in town."

"Tell me honestly, are you going to take up with that horrid woman again?"

"Unless she has changed greatly, she's not in the least horrid, Beauty. She was gentle and kind, and taught me no end."

"She seduced you, and then turned you down twice," declared this stern moralist. "That's enough for any man's mother."

"If she had married me," countered the man, "she'd have been just as unhappy as Irma, and what good would that have done either of us?"

"Tell me, are you going to let it happen again?"

"If it will comfort you to know, I am going to live in poverty and chastity and devote myself to improving mankind."

However, he didn't talk that way to Rosemary when he met her in the ballroom. Seven or eight years had passed, and he was prepared to see the ravages of time, but there was none to be observed. She was a year older than he, but that doesn't mean so much in the mid-thirties as it does in the mid-teens. She had been in the Argentine and then in the Far East; evidently she had taken care of herself wherever she was. She was of that sort, serene, unhurried and unworried; the best of everything came to her, for she had inherited that good part. Her heavy flaxen hair had lost none of its lustre and her shoulders and back none of their smooth whiteness. She wore a cream satin gown with one deep-purple orchid at the V in front. Had she put that on for him?

"Oh, Lanny!" she exclaimed. "It's so good to see you! I came just on your account."

"I had to come anyhow," he replied; "but I'm glad you're here. You haven't changed a bit. Where is Bertie?"

"He's in the Canadian Rockies, trying to shoot a wild sheep. How is Irma?"

"She's quite well. She's in New York."

"Are you happy, Lanny?"

"Who is, entirely?"

"We all hope to be; and you deserve it, because you're so kind."

"Happiness doesn't always go with kindness. It's as wild as a Rocky Mountain sheep."

They danced, and it was just like the old days; they moved together, they felt themselves one, they were wrapped in a garment made of a thousand agreeable memories: the nights on the banks of the Thames, looking at the stars on the water and listening to Kurt playing the piano; the nights on the shore of the Golfo Juan, listening to a distant orchestra playing the barcarole from the *Tales of Hoffmann*. *Belle nuit, O nuit d'amour, souris à nos ivresses; nuit plus douce que les jours, O belle nuit d'amour!* Nights much later, ten years or more, when they had sat before the fire in her villa and he had recited to her all the poetry he knew.

She was one of the most adorable of women, and if he wanted to be consoled, her bosom would be soft and warm. She said: "Bertie has quit the diplomatic service, you know; they worked him too hard and wouldn't give him any real promotion; and anyhow, he wanted to be free and play round." Lanny knew what that meant: "My husband prefers shooting sheep to taking care of his wife." "Playing round" meant some other woman, as it had meant in the old days. She might as well have said: "I am free, Lanny, if you want me."

Did he want her? He did and he didn't; such problems are less simple at thirty-six than at sixteen. He had time to think it over, for of course they couldn't dance together the whole evening; that would have made a scandal. He strolled out on the terrace, it being a still evening and not too cold. There was young Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson pacing up and down, very ill-contented; he had had one dance with his beloved and couldn't expect more at her *début* party.

"Hello, Alf!" said the old friend of his family. "How do you find Magdalen?"

"Oh, it's all right," said the youth, English fashion; then, in a sudden burst: "Tell me something, will you, Lanny?"

"Anything I know, old man."

"Does Marcy really love me?"

"Well, that's not for yes or no. She's a very different person from you, and what she means by love may be different from what you mean."

"She keeps me in a dither all the time. Sometimes I think it's my fault, and sometimes I think she means to. I imagined that love would mean peace and understanding, but I discover it's a struggle of wills. Is that right?"

"What something is and what it ought to be are often quite different." Lanny took the arm of the tall slender young man, who at this time happened to have exactly half as many months on earth as Lanny himself had. With his dark hair and keen intellectual features he seemed a return to life of Rick as Lanny had seen him when he had volunteered as a flier and come to Paris for a two-day furlough.

Moved by sudden pity, the older said: "Alfy, I'll tell you something that your father and mother know, but otherwise it's a secret. My own marriage happens to be on the rocks right now."

"Oh, Lanny, I'm so sorry!" Alfy was quite overcome, partly because he had believed this a really happy union and partly because of the honour his father's friend was doing him by his confidence.

"That may account for my being pessimistic," Lanny went on. "But this is what I've been thinking about love and marriage for many years: that the most indispensable thing is intellectual harmony. Nietzsche says somewhere that the most important question for a man to consider is whether he's going to be bored by what the woman says to him at breakfast every morning; for that is what marriage comes down to."

"That's a new thought to me, I admit, Lanny."

"It is something to think about beforehand, rather than afterwards, and save yourself a lot of regrets."

"Then you don't think I ought to try to marry Marcy?"

Lanny smiled. "Don't put that responsibility on me! I'm telling you what has caused my unhappiness, and you decide whether it means anything to you."

They went inside, because Lanny had promised to give an exhibition dance with his half-sister; they did the maxixe, a society dance which had been popular when Lanny was a boy, but which was judged too strenuous for modern taste. They took the ballroom floor, and the fashionable company sat in the chairs which lined the walls. Half-brother and sister made a lovely couple, and knew each

other so well they hadn't had to rehearse. Robbie Budd was there ; he watched and thought that his one wild oat had produced two very fine flowers. (He took Marceline for his, because he had set Beauty up in Bienveny and had supported both the painter and the child.) Beauty watched, bursting with pride, for these flowers were hers beyond dispute—and who now would say they were not worth the price they had cost ? Apparently no one, for there was vigorous applause, and the couple had to do an encore.

A most effective way to show off a débutante ; the mothers of eligible sons sat gazing through their jewelled lorgnettes and weighed the problem of a French painter's daughter who could hardly be as good as she looked. The grandson of a baronet watched and weighed, and so did his mother. Rosemary watched, knowing nothing about Alfy and his problems, but thinking about Lanny : "Should I have married him ? Or would I rather be a countess ?"

She danced with him again ; after which they sat in one of the side rooms and he brought her food and drink, and they chatted. Having given sound advice, Lanny now decided to apply it. The news about the Hoare-Laval Pact, as it was called, had appeared in New York that morning and had been in the London papers of the afternoon. Addressing an ex-diplomatist's wife, Lanny remarked : "What's this, Rosemary, about a deal with France over Abyssinia ?"

"I've been told about it," she replied. "Too bad it had to break into the newspapers ahead of time. It will stir up a lot of fuss."

"I suppose so," he admitted.

"What can we do ?" she went on. "We certainly don't want to get into a war over a place like that. If we have vital interests there, we ought to be able to make some reasonable arrangement."

"I imagine you could put Mussolini out without too much trouble," he remarked ; "but you might get something worse in his place."

"Exactly !" exclaimed his old sweetheart. "Most probably some wild-eyed Red."

So Lanny decided it was up to him to take his own advice. When Rosemary said : "Will you come to see me ?" he answered : "I'm afraid I won't have time, old darling. I'm working hard for my father and then I have to go back to New York. I'm not free like you, alas !"

16

Survival of the Fittest

LANNY thought he had never seen such a show of public anger as resulted from the publication of the Hoare-Laval Pact to surrender Abyssinia to Mussolini. Rick spoke at a huge mass meeting in Trafalgar Square and at another in Albert Hall, and at both places the audience roared its indignation over this betrayal of a public trust. The intensity of feeling was due to the recentness of the elections; there hadn't been time for anybody to forget the promises made by the government. One feature of the campaign had been a poster showing Baldwin's fist hammered down on the Covenant of the League of Nations, with the proclamation: "OUR WORD IS OUR BOND." And now, before three weeks had passed, they were selling the League out and turning its procedure into a farce!

Lanny thought: "Well, I helped a little." He said it to his chum, who replied: "Stay right where you are, my lad, and bring us all the news you can pick up." This was pleasant for Lanny in a way, because it spared him the pain of breaking with his environment; it was hard in another way, because his feelings were becoming so intense. He had to keep repeating Zoltan's formula: "I am an art lover, and do not take sides on political questions." To himself he said: "It's exactly like living with Irmá!"

He took his father and mother back to Paris. Marceline went along, for she and Beauty were going to *Bienvenu* for the season's doings. As for Robbie, he expected orders from both British and French governments, but they were smaller than he had looked for and he was more than ever disgusted with bureaucratic sluggards. He owed it as a matter of courtesy to report to Zaharoff, and Lanny drove him out there, and watched again how this old man's being came to life while listening to talk about marketing instruments of death. He chuckled and said: "I remember my first sale of the Nordenfeldt submarine, which in those days was as hard for the officials to believe in as planes are now. I sold one to my own Greek government, and then I went to the Turks, whom I hated, and said: 'The Greeks have one of these, and so your whole fleet is in direct peril. You must have two if you wish to feel safe.' So they bought two; and after that no government in Europe could withstand me."

Robbie knew that story, and told the old spider that it was a classic of their industry; whereat the spider was pleased. "The man you ought to visit right now is Mussolini," he said; but the American replied: "Unfortunately my hands are tied, because my government has issued an imbecile neutrality proclamation, forbidding the sale of munitions to any belligerent."

"Well, then, go to Göring," suggested the Knight Commander. "That will surely stir them out of their sleep."

"I have been invited by him," was Robbie's answer. "I've been waiting until I had something definite to tell him about what the others are doing."

"Tell him anyhow," said Sir Basil. "In my day I made it a rule to tell people that things were so, and then I went ahead and made them so. When I found that the Maxim machine gun was better than the Nordenfeldt, I told the world that it was my gun that had done the work. It wasn't long before I had bought Maxim out, so what difference did it make?" Few people had ever seen the munitions king of Europe laugh, and now, when Lanny saw it, he thought it an unlovely spectacle.

II

Lanny had guessed that his father wouldn't be overlooking the German market, and had been prepared to be asked for an introduction to the German Air Commander. Now, however, he learned that Göring had sent an agent to see Robbie in Paris and that Robbie was going to Berlin in the next few days. As it happened, Zoltan had got an order for one of the General's pictures; and Lanny received a letter from a merchant in Berlin, one of Johannes's old associates, saying that hard times and increased taxes had decided him to follow Lanny's suggestion and put a price on several old masters. So, on the way back from Zaharoff's, Lanny said: "Would you like me to drive you to Berlin?"

"I don't think I ought to take the time, son; I ought to fly. Why don't you come with me?" It was mid-December, but aviation technique had been so perfected that passenger planes were rarely off schedule. Lanny said: "All right," for he mustn't forget that it was his father who had given him the tip about the Hoare-Laval deal, and possibly the fat General would talk more frankly to a man of large affairs than he had ever talked to an art lover. Certainly, if you were going to be an anti-Nazi spy, you couldn't have picked a better father than the president of Budd-Erling.

Robbie had told Zaharoff that Göring would probably want to lease the American patents ; but Robbie wouldn't consider that, he was going to keep the business in his own hands, and the old munitioneer had agreed that this was the part of wisdom. "Make him pay, plane by plane," he said.

Neither of them appeared to have considered the possibility that the fat General might steal Robbie's designs. On the drive back to Paris, Lanny brought up this question, and the father replied : "Business men don't do things like that. It wouldn't pay them in the long run, because nobody would have anything more to do with them."

"You think of Göring as a business man, Robbie ?"

"He's rapidly becoming one of the biggest. I'm told he's building the greatest steel plant in Germany, and it's privately owned."

"Yes, Robbie ; any pirate or bandit might go into business after he's got enough money. I suppose Al Capone might have, if the government had let him alone."

"Well, when he did, he'd be a business man ; he'd learn that the way to make profits is to do business on a big scale, and in order to do that you have to make your word count with the people from whom you buy and to whom you sell. What you call capitalism pays a lot better than any piracy or banditry ever did."

"Oh, I know that," replied the errant son, and smiled to himself, thinking how naïve his father was—as naïve as any Nazi !

Lanny knew that it wouldn't do any good to pursue the subject, because this man of great affairs would pay no attention to what a Pink might say. Robbie was just like Irma, he refused to believe that the Nazis were as bad as they advertised themselves, and he found excuses for each and every evil deed that was brought to his attention. They had plundered Johannes Robin—yes, of course, but then Johannes had been an unconscionable *Schieber*, and as such he should have taken the precaution to get out of Germany at once and not try to sail on a yacht.

Robbie wouldn't say that to Johannes, naturally—he rarely mentioned the Nazis to his associate. But both of them had been business men all their lives and would take it for granted that their duty to the stockholders of Budd-Erling outweighed any duty they might owe to truth, justice, humanity, or any other glittering generality. Robbie would handle the German market himself, and no Jewish names would appear in connection with the concern ; after the profits had been made—well, *pecunia non olet*, money has no smell, and Johannes, a stockholder on a small scale, would

put the dividend cheques to his bank account and not to his nose.

"And besides," said Robbie, pursuing the argument, "how could I keep Göring from stealing my designs if he wants to? He can buy one of my newest models through an intermediary, and when he has one he has everything."

"What would you do if he stole them?"

"I'd threaten to sue him, and he'd know I have a case. I mightn't get justice in his courts, but I'd put my case before the business world in Britain and France and America, and it would cost him many times as much as he'd stand to gain. You see, son, our business men are trading with the Germans all the time, regardless of politics. Standard Oil has a big deal regarding patent rights with I. G. Farben, the German dye trust, and so have the du Ponts. The A.E.G., the electrical trust, is in the same position, and I don't doubt that the Hermann Göring Stahlwerke have many such understandings in America. Anyhow, the men who run those big German trusts are Göring's bosses, don't you ever forget it; they'd soon make him see that he's no longer a bandit but a captain of industry."

"I suppose so," said Lanny meekly. He, too, must play his game according to the rules.

III

Father and son had an early breakfast in Paris and a late lunch in Berlin, after which a staff car called for Robbie to bring him to the fat General, while Lanny went to see his client, inspected his art works, and agreed upon a list of prices. When he got back to the hotel, there was a call from Kurt Meissner; Lanny had telegraphed to Stubendorf and the message had been forwarded to Berlin, Kurt being here to see his music publisher. Lanny said: "*Herrlich!* Come to dinner!" He called Heinrich Jung, who was no less pleased, and began telling Lanny over the telephone all the wonders of a new illustrated text-book which his organization was distributing to German-speaking youth all over the world. Lanny had to remind himself that he was a Nazi neophyte, and that the achievements of the New Order were his own.

Twenty-two years ago this Christmas the three boys had romped in the snow at Stubendorf, and listened to the old Graf speaking to his people about *deutsche Treue und Würde*. How Lanny had loved the Germans in those days! It seemed to him it was the Germans who had changed and that he was the true disciple of Beethoven and Goethe; but he could never make them see it, and if they could

read his thoughts they would call him a viper whom they had nourished in their bosom. Did Kurt guess? Lanny couldn't be sure; he watched for signs of it in Heinrich, feeling sure that Kurt would not fail to warn the young official. But Heinrich appeared his usual naïve and enthusiastic self, and talked as if Lanny were a swimmer poised upon the bank and needing only the slightest push to get him into the water.

Lanny had a story to tell about his visit to Berchtesgaden, and who had been there, and everything that had come from the mouth of the adored Adolf. Lanny gave the credit for this honour to Heinrich, and the Hauptförster's son was so pleased and so absorbed in the narrative that he almost forgot the large fat pheasant which his host had caused to be placed before him. Lanny told what his father was here for, and about the achievements of the new Budd-Erling fighter. Good news for the Fatherland, and Lanny neglected to mention that Robbie had also been marketing the plane in Britain and France. Heinrich told of the elaborate programme whereby hundreds of thousands of the youths of Germany were being taught to soar in glider planes, so that their future training as aviators would be easy; Lanny said that he had seen this in the course of his motoring during the summer, and Heinrich added that his organization had issued much literature about it, and he would furnish Lanny with a set.

Kurt revealed that he was planning to come to Paris before the winter was over. He didn't want to become provincial in his tastes, and had decided to make a study of French music, also to give recitals in Paris; that might be a way of building up friendship between the two peoples, as the Führer so greatly desired. This sounded like the old Kurt talking, and Lanny was pleased. He had never given up the dream he had acquired at Hellerau, that the arts might become a means of international unification; the art lovers, the good Europeans, would teach brotherhood and humanity to all the peoples. *Einen Kuss der ganzen Welt!*

Lanny described his visit to Salzburg, which seemed to him another Hellerau; but he found his two friends unwilling to accept this festival as a manifestation of the German *Geist*. To them it was a somewhat pathetic effort of dissident elements to maintain a resistance to German solidarity. Kurt and Heinrich wanted, not merely political and economic *Anschluss* with Austria, but intellectual and artistic as well, and they heard without joy about the crowds which had made it impossible for Lanny and his wife to find hotel accommodations in the town.

Lanny didn't mention the break with Irma; he said that she was

at Shore Acres, and he was planning to go there before long. He might be back in Paris later, and would be glad to see Kurt and do what he could to promote his musical efforts. Emily Chattersworth would help, also; Kurt asked how she was, and expressed admiration for her. How much of it did he mean? Lanny wasn't going to forget how Kurt had come to Paris as a German agent and had exploited Emily's interest in music. Was he coming now as an agent of the Nazis? Of course he must know that Lanny would be thinking of this; their relationship would be complicated.

IV

Robbie Budd came in towards the end of the evening, well pleased with himself, having apparently made a hit with the fat General. He had been invited to stay for dinner in the ministerial residence, and with several staff officers had talked aviation and what the various nations were doing with it. Robbie had collected a lot of information, and didn't mind revealing the fact to his son's old friends. He didn't have to do any play-acting, for his point of view was clear-cut and elementary—he believed in the survival of the fittest, and just at present fitness was proved by ability to appreciate and willingness to purchase the Budd-Erling P7. Since Germany apparently stood first in possession of these qualifications, the criterion was satisfactory to Kurt Meissner and Heinrich Jung.

The American of large affairs thought that he had seen some big things in the course of his life, but he admitted that he had learned something when he was escorted through the new building in Berlin which was to house the offices of the German Air Force. Three thousand rooms, if you could imagine such a thing—and instantaneous connection with every airport and military establishment in Germany. Imagine the size of the force which was going to require all that administering! Robbie talked technicalities, and the German pair listened with a glow in their cheeks, even while they didn't understand the details. Lanny watched and thought to himself: "No, Kurt, you're not going to Paris to learn about French music, or yet because you want to help the spread of an all-European culture?"

After the guests had left, Robbie talked about his business affairs. As he had foreseen, the fat General had wanted to lease his patents; if the Budd-Erling stood up to the tests which were scheduled for to-morrow morning, the General would offer him an annual cash subsidy, with a twenty per cent. increase year after year for as long

as the patents were used. That was to take the place of a royalty on each plane—since the number of planes manufactured would have to be a military secret. Robbie said that this cash payment would be velvet for the company, the investors having taken stock for their rights. It would put the concern on easy street, and Lanny could see that his father was strongly tempted. He gave no thought to the moral questions involved; if British and French planes were ever machine-gunned and driven out of the sky by Budd-Erling planes, it would teach something to those bureaucrats and brass-hats whom Robbie Budd had been fighting ever since the last war. What but a machine-gun bullet could penetrate their armour-plated skulls?

"Strictly between you and me," remarked the manufacturer, "I believe that Göring is making a serious mistake; what he really needs is bombing-planes, for how else will he be able to get at Britain? It's the British who will need the fighters for defence. But you see, Göring was a flier in the last war and his mind is obsessed by those memories. He talked for an hour or more about his own exploits, and made plain that what he expects is a series of individual dogfights. He has visions of swarms of young Germans winning glory like himself, and the qualities he wants in his planes are speed and manoeuvrability. He doesn't foresee the coming of heavier planes, with armour and doubled firepower. But of course it's not up to me to teach him his business; I haven't any bombers to sell!"

"Make him pay!" exclaimed the son; and the father replied: "Oh, boy, trust me!"



Lanny might have gone to witness the tests, but once had been enough for him; he was sick of images of wholesale slaughter, and conversation about it, and especially about the profits to be derived from it. It seemed to him that he had been born into a most unlovely time and place and section of society; he yearned for some remote and peaceful isle in the South Seas. That being impossible, he made an appointment with Oberleutnant Furtwaengler—now promoted to be Hauptmann—to meet him and get the painting; he would have it crated and turn it over to the care of the American Express Company. Also he was sending cablegrams concerning his other client's paintings; it might be possible that he would have orders for some of those before Robbie was ready to leave. There would be some money to turn over to Trudi Schultz, and a lot of data which Rick might make into a series of articles.

He was sorry he hadn't gone along with his father, who came back late in the day with a wonderful story. The plane had stood the most exacting tests, and the fat General had been so pleased that he had shown the plane's creator some of the closely guarded secrets of the new German Air Force. Robbie had been taken to Kladow, a village near Berlin which had been turned into a centre of aviation research. It was now a tract eight miles in circumference, with four thousand men at work day and night on the buildings and grounds. It was like an immense university, in fact two of them, an Academy of Air War and a Technical School of Aviation. There were models of every aeroplane known—to Robbie's consternation the fat General had shown him copies of all the seven Budd-Erling models, and stood shaking with laughter as he watched the American's face.

Also there were models of every sort of military target, and students practising at bombing them. There was one of the most powerful radio stations in the world, and even a yacht club on a lake shore. The goggle-eyed visitor had been escorted into one of the underground hangars, so deep that no bomb could reach them and with the entrances so camouflaged with nets and other devices that no air photographs would reveal them. Everything complete under there, including living-quarters for the operating and maintenance staffs, a reading-room with the latest technical magazines, and writing-pads so that the men could make notes of anything important. "By God!" added the awe-stricken business man. "They even had a freshly sharpened pencil alongside each pad!"

What was it that caused the master of this magic thus to reveal his secrets to a stranger? What had induced him to boast that Germany was now spending upon military preparations five times as much as Britain and more than two and a half times as much as Britain and France together? Was it the sudden impulse of a brag-gart? Robbie guessed that it was a considered policy; the Nazis wished to frighten their opponents and to spread a legend of invincibility, against the time when the Führer might be ready to make his next move. "You can see it working in the case of Italy," he remarked. "The British are afraid to fire a gun at Suez, because they can't really be sure that Il Duce is lying about his new air force."

"Is he?" asked Lanny; and the father replied: "How can I be sure?"

Of course Kladow was "just the nuts" for Robbie Budd. He could go back to Paris and London and tell harrowing stories about what he had seen. They would think he was exaggerating, naturally; but they couldn't know, and vague anxiety would creep in under their brass hats. "This war," Robbie would tell them,

speaking of it as if it had already begun, "this war is going to be different from the last; it's going to be right over your own heads, and all you diplomats, bureaucrats, and office-rats will have to dig deep holes." They didn't appreciate his crude American humour.

VI

For once Lanny was in agreement with his father, in the desire that Britain and France should have fighting-planes. It distressed him that the Nazis should be getting any; but Robbie had his answer all pat: "If I didn't get Göring's orders I mightn't be able to keep going, and America wouldn't have my fine fabricating-plant. With the ocean between us and our enemies, what we need is not great numbers of planes, but the means of building them quickly. If I sell a batch to Göring, I'll go home and put the cash into building a better one; already I've got the 'mock-up' started, and a year from now I'll have that better plane and Göring will have nothing."

"Unless Göring uses your planes to get something in the meantime, Robbie."

"Well, he can't get anything from America, and that's all you and I have to worry about."

Robbie had turned down the offer to lease his patents; he was here to sell planes, he said, and the next day he sold twenty of them, at \$21,500 each. A contract was prepared, with Lanny helping his father as translator, a service which entitled him to have his Berlin expenses charged against the company. It was Robbie's first big deal in his new field, and there were many traps to be watched out for; the long document had to be studied phrase by phrase, and several times in a day Robbie had a telephone conference with Johannes, who knew the German language, and contracts, and the Nazis.

"You see how it is," said the father. "Göring knows what he wants, and he puts down the cash and gets it. But what a difference in Washington! Our army men have seen just what Göring has seen, and they know that no plane can equal ours, yet they have to go through the farce of advertising specifications and inviting bids!"

"I admit that the Nazis' is the right way to get things done," replied the stubborn son. "But suppose it's the wrong things?"

"You can be sure it's the right thing in this case," replied the patient father. "You notice the General insists upon getting his planes ahead of any other customers. I take it that something is going to happen this spring."

VII

Lanny had promised to pay a call at the office of Heinrich Jung ; that seemed a cheap return for the telephone message to the Berghof. Of course Heinrich had told all over the place the story of his friend's visit to the Führer, and now all the staff of the Reichsjugendführung wanted the honour of shaking the hand which had shaken the Führer's hand only four months ago. It was a spiritual thing they sought, something which couldn't be affected by soap and water.

As he sat beside his friend's desk, Lanny's eye couldn't help roaming, and among the papers lying there, one gave him an inner start. A tiny thin pamphlet, three inches by four, strangely familiar to his eyes. It was lying so that the letters were upside down to him, but he could read the two biggest words, and guess the others : " ABRAHAM LINCOLN : *Sein Leben und Seine Ideen.*"

" I notice that title, Heinrich," he said, pointing. " May I look at it ? "

" Surely," answered his friend, and handed it over.

" Abraham Lincoln. Are you circulating literature about him ? "

" That is not our literature."

Lanny read again : " Leipzig : Deutscher Nationalsozialistischer Kulturbund."

" I have made certain that there is no such organization," explained the official. " The thing is printed by some of our secret enemies, and is designed to deceive the persons who read it."

" *Ausserordentlich !* How did you get it ? "

" It was deposited in the dinner-pail of a young factory worker who has been educated by our organization. He turned it over to his Gauleiter, who forwarded it to us."

" I should think that would be a case for the Gestapo," ventured the caller.

" *Natürlich.* I called them and learned that they already have copies. We have reason to think that the thing has been printed abroad, for it has appeared near the border in several different places."

" What won't they think of next ! " exclaimed the American.

" It is a particularly vicious document," remarked the official. " You start reading a perfectly sound story of Abraham Lincoln—I admit that I didn't know much about him, and was interested at once. But before long I began to see that its character had changed ; it became a series of poisonous remarks—all rather vague, so that the average ignorant worker might fail to realize that he was reading

treason. But he would be absorbing all sorts of doubts as to the sincerity of our regime and the reality of our achievements."

"That might be pretty dangerous, Heinrich."

"It won't take us long to track the thing down. There have been a whole series of schemes, each more cunning than the last, but they have all been detected and the criminals have been put where they can't do any harm. For the most part this propaganda is being carried on with foreign money, and our job is to find out where that comes from."

"I should think that Kurt might be of use to you in a matter like that," ventured Lanny.

"No, Kurt wouldn't have the right contacts for such work." Heinrich's bright blue Aryan eyes gazed into Lanny's brown ones with perfect candour.

"It might be that I would have. You know, I have met a lot of those people, and have some relatives among them. They talk freely in my presence, and I might pick up a hint."

"*Herrlich*, Lanny! If you hear anything, and will let me know, I'll surely make use of it, and you will earn my everlasting gratitude."

"You have earned mine already," said the American, as he laid the poison-pen pamphlet back on the Nazi's desk.

VIII

So Lanny had an interesting story to tell Trudi when he flew back to Paris. He had his ten per cent. on two picture sales to put into her hands, and she had the proofs of a new pamphlet celebrating Bismarck as the founder of the modern German state. At least, it celebrated him for the first page and a half, and after that it turned into a carefully documented indictment of force as the basis of a state's progress in the modern world. Why was the Nazi regime keeping secret its budget of military expenditures? Was it hoping to deceive Germany's neighbour states, or was it the German people themselves who were not allowed to know that their government was now spending three times as much on armaments as Britain?

Lanny stopped his reading, and said: "You can make it stronger. It is five times as much as Britain and more than two and a half times as much as Britain and France combined. So Göring told my father a few days ago."

"So much the better," said Trudi. Already she was learning to take the writer's point of view!

"The comrades who are doing the distributing are to be complimented," said Lanny. He repeated what Heinrich had said, and

added : " Don't ever give me a hint about those people. I might say it in my sleep sometime ; but I can never say it if I don't know it."

" You might get it by telepathy," smiled his friend.

He took her for a drive, and they had lunch in a remote *auberge* by the bare and frosty banks of one of those seven rivers which meander through the plains surrounding Paris. He had laid down rules as to her eating and sleeping, and she had been obeying them, with the result that she had regained some of her lost weight and had a little colour in her cheeks. She could still worry all she pleased about the fate of her husband and friends, but she no longer had to be afraid for her own physical safety, and the human creature is so constituted that this is a great relief to the subconscious if not to the conscious mind.

" My father wants me to go back to New York with him," he told her, " but I think I'll make excuses."

" You ought to go, Lanny," insisted the woman. " Your wife may have changed her mind."

" There is the mail," he responded.

" I know ; but there is her pride to be considered. She doesn't want to lose her status and be taken for granted. She has to be wanted, if love is to mean anything."

" I'll go a bit later ; I've promised to spend Christmas at Bienvenu and dance with my sister at a party. And besides, I have to admit that my father's conversation tries my patience. I've heard a couple of weeks' talk about destroying men and making money, and it becomes hard for me to be polite. I've done a lot of philosophizing about what seems to me a ghastly perversion of thought. My father is a good man in many ways, a man of real creative energy. He's supposed to be educated, too - he went to Yale, and they taught him a social code that might have come out of ancient Rome. He talks about the survival of the fittest, and takes it for granted that the fittest are the most greedy. He's not at all like that himself ; he's generous and considerate to his friends, and it's only when he thinks of social classes and nations that you'd take him for another Hermann Göring."

Trudi made a curious reply : " I wonder if Göring could be like that, too."

IX

Christmas at Bienvenu ; but it wasn't the same, because there were no children. Lanny realized more acutely that he had lost his family. Of course there was Marceline, who remained a child even

while playing at being a young lady. He was fond of her, and glad to see her happy ; he tried to teach her something that might be of use to her, and he kept on, even though sadly aware that most of what he said went in at one ear and out at the other. It wasn't that she did not have the brains ; it was that she had been trained by Beauty and Beauty's friends, including Irma. For six years she had lived in the reflected glory of the Barnes fortune, and while she didn't admit it to Lanny, she was dreaming of making a rich match and becoming a *grande dame* whose doing* would be reported in the newspapers. Lanny could disturb and distress her by his antisocial remarks, but he was powerless to change her.

He didn't want to live in the Cottage with its thousand memories of Irma and Frances. He had a cot put in his studio, and stayed there a good part of the time, playing the piano and reading the books of his great-great-uncle which had decorated the walls for many years. Also he pushed the picture business, so as to keep a stream of illegal literature flowing into Germany—that was his excuse for living. But he was restless, because he had been a married man and now he was what the world called a grass-widower, and he missed what he had got used to.

All the time there was his mother, watching him yearningly, pushing at him gently but firmly ; she spoke only a small part of her thoughts, but Lanny knew them all—he was to go back to Irma, apologize and promise to be " good," and repair his dreadful blunder before it was too late. She begged him to write and say that he was coming ; to pacify her, he did this. He told Irma about his trip with Robbie, and the messages that Kurt and Heinrich sent, and about the Oberleutnant becoming a Hauptmann ; he told about the party in London and the one being prepared at Sept Chênes ; he sent messages of love to his little daughter and promised to come and see her before the end of January. He added : " I am sorry, and I still love you " ; but he didn't follow his mother's sly suggestion and mention having danced with Rosemary at his half-sister's debut party.

X

Right after New Year, Emily Chattersworth arrived, bringing her servants according to her custom. She had offered to have the party at her place, and now Beauty would have the time of her life giving the orders and going over the lists of guests with her old friend. The Riviera was a place where people came and went, and you had to study the newspapers and then telephone your friends

to find out who the newcomers were ; your friends would ask you to invite So-and-so, and if you valued these friends you would say Yes, and if you didn't you would make excuses, and also, perhaps, enemies. You mustn't have too long a list, because that wouldn't be *distingué* : on the other hand, if you had too few, that would indicate that you were skimping. Robbie had given Beauty a cheque for her services, and had added ten thousand francs for Marceline, telling the mother to go the limit, since the girl would have only one chance. There wouldn't be any need to engage "talent," since she and Lanny would provide it ; but there must be the best coloured band on the Riviera, and there must be food and drink without limit.

Lanny had taken part in preparations of this sort ever since he could remember ; he had run errands and offered advice—at first his mother had accepted it in a spirit of play, but before long she began accepting it seriously. Now he was not merely Beauty's son but Irma's husband, which meant that he was an authority on the affairs of the *beau monde*, and it would have been unkind to shut himself up and play the piano and refuse to take any interest in the question whether Prince Dimitrovitch was an ex-nobleman or only a sort of ex-country squire, and whether Mrs. Packingham from Chicago was socially important now that she was living here permanently on a comparatively small alimony.

Marceline had never taken any responsibility ; it was her role to be beautiful, gay, and free, and this she did to perfection. Having already been launched under the best auspices in London, she was invited everywhere, and had to be advised which invitations to accept and which to evade. She wasn't told in crude language that certain persons had money while others lacked it ; she was told in refined language that certain families were "desirable," and that certain *partis*—that is, candidates for matrimony—were "hardly eligible," while others were "catches." If the *parti* was European, some member of his family or else the family lawyer would make the proper approach to Beauty or Lanny ; while if he was American, he waded right in on his own account. It was the duty of a girl just turned eighteen to know how to deal with these different sorts of males : which it was safe to flirt with, which must be treated with reserve, and which must be "frozen." The Riviera was full of all kinds of pretenders and parasites, impecunious noblemen and refugees from revolutions which might or might not be permanent, so that marrying off a daughter became a political as well as an economic problem.

Among many candidates was a nephew of the Marchesa di San Girolamo, who lived very modestly in an unfashionable part of

Cannes. The marchesa belonged to one of the oldest Tuscan families, but there had been some scandal which nobody seemed to know about, and she had been a resident of the Côte d'Azur since before Mussolini. Just recently had come this nephew, a Fascist aviator with the rank of captain; he had led the first attack by an Italian squadron in Abyssinia, and after gloriously bombarding native troops and villages and being decorated for it he had been grounded in rough mountain country by engine trouble. He had come near to death, having crawled into hiding and been saved from the savage enemy only by the advance of Il Duce's army. As a reward for all this he had several medals, a badly scarred body, a bloodless pale face, and an empty left sleeve. From the happy days before his accident he had brought aristocratic features and a tiny sharp-pointed black moustache; also pride, romantic charm, and a devil-may-care spirit.

A dangerous person, as any competent mother would instantly perceive; and it did not escape Beauty Budd's mother-eagle eye that this *elegantissimo* was strongly attracted to her incomparable daughter. Vittorio di San Girolamo couldn't dance like the other suitors, but he could stroll on a terrace in the moonlight or sit by a gleaming fireside and tell hair-raising stories about solo flights along the sides of mountain precipices, dropping bombs upon fortresses never before seen by a white man, so close to the targets that the explosions would throw the plane into the air; plunging down into canyons so narrow that the wing-tips had brushed the foliage, machine-gunning savage enemies who were accustomed to inflict dreadful mutilations upon prisoners of war.

When Marceline came home and repeated these tales, the anxious mother replied: "Don't forget, my darling, he probably has a pension of a couple of hundred lire a month—about sixteen dollars—and his aunt has to collect her income from a score of peasant families who scratch a bare living out of terraces on a mountainside."

XI

It gave Lanny satisfaction to see the British Foreign Secretary forced out of office as a result of the Hoare-Laval fiasco; but Rick wrote him not to be too hopeful. "The Tories will bend before the storm, but they won't break," said the Englishman. "Public opinion in this country can prevent some especially flagrant offence, but it is powerless to compel any sound positive action. Mussolini will go right ahead with his conquest, and in the end he'll probably get more than Hoare-Laval tried to give him."

The forces of protest in France were equally active, centering their attacks upon Laval. Lanny couldn't keep away from it entirely—he would learn about a meeting somewhere in the neighbourhood and decide that he ought to know what the people were thinking and saying; he would slip in unobserved and sit in a corner, and when he found that the speakers didn't know as much as they ought to, he would yearn to get up and tell the whole truth. He would take Raoul to lunch, finding excuse to drive somewhere into the country where they wouldn't be recognized. He knew that German agents swarmed like flies over the Riviera, and he didn't want to sacrifice any part of his double role.

French national elections were due in the spring, and all the energies of the Left were centred upon getting rid of the *fripou mongol* and his gang. The Front Populaire programme was now in effect and the two powerful workers' parties, Communist and Socialist, had ceased their sniping at each other. It was the thing for which an American Pink had been pleading over a period of years, and he urged his Spanish friend to stick to it in spite of all difficulties. Raoul said that those at the school were doing their best; he believed the effort would succeed, at least until after the election period, but it was hard to travel along with Communists, because they had a philosophy which justified intrigue and deception. Did any Communist ever really believe in parliamentary methods of procedure? Lanny recalled what Bess had said, and fell silent.

The elections in Spain were due even earlier, in February; and there Raoul had high hopes. The united front was working there also, and a tremendous campaign of education was being carried on among the peasants and the workers in the towns. In spite of all the jailings and beatings, nothing had been able to stop it. "My people are fierce individualists," said the school director. "Really, Lanny, you ought to go there and get to know them; it would do your heart good. A man may be in rags, and wearing sandals made of rope, but he keeps his natural dignity, and by now he has learned who it is that is exploiting his labour."

"I am expecting to leave for New York in a few days," Lanny explained. "When I come back, I might like to take such a trip. Would you care to go with me and act as interpreter?"

"I'm afraid it would be risky for me to go into Spain, Lanny; they're bound to have me on their shooting-list."

"Not if you travel with a rich American," replied the other, with a smile. "I would be an art expert, and I'd take you into the palaces of your enemies; they would tell you all their plans, just as they do

here on the Riviera. I have to report the painful fact that they have no idea of submitting to a popular verdict if it goes against them; that applies to Spain as to France. If they are forced to it, they will find some man like Mussolini to hold you down and keep their seat on your backs."

"I know," said Raoul sadly. "That is why I try not to quarrel with the Communists in spite of all provocations. We have to bear them in mind as a sort of last resort. There may be no peaceful way."

XII

Marceline Detaze, half French and half American, had been reared in one country and got her ideas from another. She desired to live like an American girl on the Coast of Pleasure: to have her own car and drive where she pleased, to make her own dates, and above all to choose her husband without tiresome consultations with her elders. She was of an affectionate nature, but apparently that was on the surface and did not reach down to the level from which her actions were derived. She had in her an odd stubborn streak: she would listen amiably to all the warnings and exhortations—and then go quietly ahead and do what she pleased.

She liked the company of Vittorio di San Girolamo. She said that the idea of her falling in love with him was silly; she wasn't going to fall in love with any man, she was going to have a good time, and for a long, long time. She was going to have beaux, all kinds, and many of each. Since it was better for her to do her entertaining at home, Beauty invited the young airman to Bienvenu; he came to lunch and spent the afternoon, and presently it was time to dress for dinner; Marceline asked him to stay, and he was there all evening—for practical purposes a member of the family.

To Lanny this was an unpleasant development, and Il Capitano di San Girolamo a most unpleasant personality. He was only twenty-four, and hadn't read much, but there were few things he thought he didn't know. He had been filled to the brim with the Fascist ideology and his assurance that it comprehended all truth was the more annoying because it was expressed with such suavity and quiet dignity of manner. He knew that Fascismo was destined to rule Mare Nostrum—Our Sea—and the lands all about it, and he was sorry for any persons who hadn't adjusted their minds to the fact. As to his personal future he was clear: his wounds, decorations, and family position entitled him to a diplomatic career, and to become governor of a province in that new Roman Empire which Il Duce was engaged in establishing.

Sacro egoismo was the phrase ; you made yourself holy by the force with which you asserted your own Godhead. The Italians were the coming race, and *Fascismo* the creation of their genius. By the right of their newly discovered power and under the guidance of their great leader they would take what they pleased, as other races had done in the past, as their own race had done more than two thousand years ago, building an empire which had endured for centuries and had been revived for yet more centuries. Vittorio had got his history out of some Fascist text-book, and apparently it hadn't informed him that the Holy Roman Empire had been pretty much a dream, and that while it existed it had been governed by Franks and Teutons, never by Italians.

This glorious bomber of barefooted black troops and mud-hovels had apparently never heard about his host's eccentric ideas ; he took it for granted that Lanny believed what the other darlings of fortune on the Riviera believed, and so he talked freely. Lanny held his tongue, and, watching his half-sister, perceived that she was swallowing hook, line, and sinker ; it was her first glimpse of the world of ideas and her first dream of glory. When he got her alone he tried patiently and kindly to show her how phony it was, the cheapest circus tinsel, illuminated by some kind of calcium light which would fizzle out quickly ; but he found that he was getting nowhere, for the reason that Marceline had heard ever since her childhood that her half-brother was a victim of the subtle Red propaganda—and now he was trying to pass the disease on to her ! No, Vittorio was a real hero, and his cause was proving itself in action. In the battle for Marceline's mind Lanny was licked before he began.

XIII

He talked to his mother about it. " The fellow looks to me like a fortune-hunter under the sign of the fasces. All this career that he's outlining depends upon money, and he hasn't the nerve to claim that his own family has it."

" But, Lanny, he can't imagine that *we* have ! "

" Of course he does ; he thinks we are American multi-millionaires. We live on a big estate, and know all the smart people, and we're planning a grand party. What else can he suppose ? "

" He should see my unpaid bills ! "

" All the rich have unpaid bills ; that is one of their privileges. He has doubtless heard that Robbie is launching a new industry. Above all, he knows about Irma. You are leaving your friends to

suppose that she is coming back here, so naturally Vittorio imagines it's all in the family."

"What do you want to do, Lanny?"

"I ought to have a straight talk with him. He's a Continental, and expects a *dot*; he'll count it a favour if I explain that Marceline won't have any."

"Will he believe you?"

"I'll make it perfectly clear that I have no money but what I earn, that you have only the allowance my father gives you, and that I've broken with my wife and won't have a cent of her money."

"Oh, my God, Lanny!"

"You'll see how it works! The Capitano will fold up his tents like the Arabs and as silently steal away."

"But, Lanny, the scandal!"

"Whatever scandal there is we have to face, and what's the good of putting it off day after day?"

"Oh, you promised me you would go and see Irma!"

"I did and I will; but I told you that nothing would come of it, and you only deceive yourself when you cherish any hope."

Beauty began to weep. "Oh, Lanny, Lanny! We have been such a happy family! And I thought all our problems were solved!"

She had tried, but couldn't bring herself to face the cruel reality. No! No! Not a word! Keep the skeleton locked in the family closet! She would talk to the young airman herself, and tell him about the poverty which had dogged her all her life; she would tell him that she had never had a penny from Irma and never expected to have one; that the place was plastered with mortgages. "He won't be able to find out about that, will he, Lanny?"

"He can look it up any time he wants to; and then he'll think you're lying about everything."

"I can tell him that the place belongs to Robbie, and that he's threatened to turn me out and sell it. Robbie will back me up, for he certainly won't care to see Marceline married to a poor crippled Dago—that's what he'll call him!"

XIV

Margy Eversham-Watson came to occupy the Cottage for the season, and some friends of Sophie's leased the Lodge; so Beauty would have plenty of company, and a bridge four always at hand. Everybody was interested in the coming party and helped when they could. When the great evening arrived, Lanny put on his white tie

and tails, and Marceline a rose-pink tulle costume bought with Robbie's money. The white-haired Emily looked stately and noble in black velvet, and the golden-haired Beauty Budd in white satin was asked if she was the *débutante*. Music, laughter, and the perfume of flowers filled the air of the very splendid villa. Lanny danced with light feet but a heavy heart; having created patterns in times of joy, he could reproduce them in times of sorrow. The elegant company knew nothing about the state of his heart, and applauded enthusiastically; the occasion was one of great *éclat* for the Budd-Detaze-Dingle family.

There is an old song telling about the sad things which happen after the ball is over, and it was so with the abdicating prince consort. He packed his bags for the drive to Marseille, with the family chauffeur to bring back the car. The last thing before departing he put his arm around Marceline, led her aside, and exhorted: "Remember, Little Sister, if you marry an Italian Fascist you come under their code, which makes woman nothing but a brood animal, and your one duty will be to bear children so that Il Duce can have plenty of soldiers for his new empire."

Little Sister's reply was: "Boo!"

17

A Fruitless Crown

I

"THE proprieties are very important to the rich"—so remarked a character in one of Rick's dramas. "If it were not for the proprieties, the poor would surely take their riches." And now the visiting husband discovered that the proprieties were going to rule at Shore Acres. Irma brought the child to meet him at the steamer, and the child provided all the warmth necessary to a proper reunion. She was at the age where they grow fast, and half a year provides many surprises; an inch or two taller, many pounds heavier, a new vocabulary, a set of new ideas, new questions. "Oh, Papa, why do you stay away so long? Oh, Papa, will you stay for my birthday?"

He told her about the wonderful party they had had at Sept

Chênes, and how he had danced with Marceline. Frances had a dancing teacher, a piano and singing teacher, and told him all about these. She prattled a little rudimentary French and he would teach her more; in these matters she was in his hands. She had heard no hint that there was anything wrong with him; a tragic thing that there had to be, and both the parents, sitting in the car with the eager little one between them, felt a tugging at their heart-strings.

At Shore Acres he found the same desperate determination that the proprieties should rule. "Mother" and Uncle Horace came to the door to greet him. "Mother" kissed him, and her brother shook him warmly by the hand. Not one of the servants must see any sign that his status was diminished. Having lived in the fashionable world for thirty-six years, Lanny was familiar with the fact that people often say one thing when they mean another; they laugh gaily when their hearts are weeping; they express cordiality when in reality they dislike you and begin to run you down the moment you are out of the room. So now in the smiling faces of this elderly brother and sister he read anxiety, in their voices he heard mock humility.

He understood the situation. He was the father of the most precious of all children, and had committed no offence which would enable Irma to deprive him of his rights. He might insist upon taking the little one away for six months every year, and no court in the world would say No. He might take her motoring and put her on board a steamer for France, and once outside the ten-mile limit, they might be for ever powerless to get her back. So, bow down before him! Study his whims, ask what he wants and try to supply it, make him feel that this is his home, in which he can enjoy every privilege, and even the spiritual benefits of love and affection, cordiality and admiration. If he expresses dislike for any person, that person will cease to be invited; if he expresses an opinion as to the prospects of the market, Uncle Horace, who considers himself Wall Street's leading authority, will hasten to agree.

What in their secret hearts did they feel, and what were they hoping the young couple would do? Lanny would never know. Irma was the boss of the establishment; she would settle it, and the elders, the dowager and the derelict, would accommodate themselves as best they could. That was the way the public utilities king had decreed it when he had drafted his will; the widow down and the daughter up—and himself standing at the top of the great staircase, frowning down upon the scene, knowing that he had employed the best lawyers and that his orders would stand.

II

The little darling was sent away to her governess, and Lanny was alone with his wife in her apartment. He looked at her and she at him. "Well, Irma?" he said; and she answered: "Well, Lanny?"

"I have thought about it a lot, dear." He waited, and when she did not answer he said: "It was you who went away."

"I know; and you who have stayed a long while." So they sparred. He asked: "You haven't changed your mind?" and she replied: "Have you?"

Someone had to break the ice, and he had promised his mother to try. "I still love you, dear," he said, and she answered: "I still love you; but have you changed your mind?" He said: "No," and she at once replied: "I haven't changed mine."

So it was a deadlock, and not much more to be said. Irma had had a long talk with Robbie since his return from abroad, and Robbie, sensible fellow, had known there wasn't any use trying to fool her as to Lanny's attitude. Robbie was a man who could be trusted with a confidence, and both had trusted him; he had tried to serve as arbitrator, and the best compromise he could suggest was what they had right now. They would be friends, and be polite to each other, but go their own ways and not be husband and wife.

Irma had the suite with the solid gold bathroom fixtures and Lanny had the suite with the solid silver bathroom fixtures. Between them hung a generously proportioned door of eucalyptus wood, known in the days of J. Paramount Barnes as "Circassian walnut" and very highly esteemed. That door stayed open both by day and by night, but neither of them crossed its threshold. Lanny would lie in his sumptuous bed with the baby-blue silk coverlet, and would try to guess: "What does she really want?" The hearts of men and women are not simple, and he guessed that her emotions were mixed like his own. Did she want to be wanted, even though in vain? If he came to her bedside and tried to seduce her, would she be secretly pleased or would she consider it a breach of faith?

There was much that he might have said. "I want you to know that I haven't been making love to any other woman. I have no thought of any other woman but you." He might have said: "We have a great deal in common, dear, and for the child's sake we ought to work out some arrangement." She would have been willing to talk it out with him, but what had he to propose? Would he give up his interest in left-wing causes? Would he give up helping

Trudi Schultz and others like her when they asked him? Would he say that if ever he met some anti-Nazi or anti-Fascist in peril of his life he wouldn't help that person to escape? No, he wouldn't say any of these things; to broach the subject would be to start another wrangle, of the sort that killed all love and even friendship. As for Irma, would she say: "I am willing to go on loving you, even while I know that you are doing the things I hate and fear"? Well, if she was willing to say anything like that, let her give him a hint! Any woman knows how.

III

He played the piano for Frances and watched her music lessons; he taught her Provençal songs, and danced with her to the music of a gramophone; he romped with her in the snow and pulled her on a sled. She rarely went off the estate, for it had everything a child nearing six could desire, including the children of several of the staff, with whom she played under supervision of the trustworthy Miss Addington, who had educated Marceline. Irma's friends came; they were supposed to be his friends also, and they played squash and billiards and bridge, they swam in the indoor pool, they danced in one another's homes and in roadhouses built for their entertainment. Irma had always been a reserved woman, and Lanny a queer fish, so no one suspected trouble between them. When they went in to a show, they took the old people along, which was a kindness and at the same time spared an estranged couple the temptation to intimate talk.

Lanny drove over to Newcastle and spent a while with his father's family, visiting the new plant. They were working on the planes for General Göring, also on trainer planes for the United States Army and on sport planes for the rich. Aviation was spreading everywhere and the tireless Johannes was searching out new business; flying to Canada, where freight was being ferried to prospectors in the northern wilderness; to Central America, where planes were hopping over jungles and up into precipitous mountains. Robbie Budd was completely absorbed in his grand new job. Esther, taking Lanny for a confidant, reported that her husband was no longer going downhill; he still had his whisky, but wasn't increasing the quantity, and his substitute for the stock market was a night of poker once a week with his cronies.

Lanny moved to the home which Hansi and Bess had bought on a point of the Connecticut shore. The couple went into the city and

gave concerts, frequently for the benefit of refugees, or of working-class agitators in trouble with the police; it was damaging to the reputation of two distinguished artists, and their agent protested as much as he dared. The grand-daughter of the Puritans would answer: "We don't have to be rich." Pretty soon she would have to retire for a while, on account of the expected baby.

Lanny was a free man. He could go into New York when he pleased, and didn't have to say where he had been or whom he had met; if he wanted to spend the night, there was nobody to worry. He could call at the office of the *New Leader*, have lunch with its editors in the Rand School cafeteria, and listen to all the Pink talk he pleased. He could even go to a Communist meeting in Mecca Temple, slipping in quietly and watching the united front in action—not altogether perfect action, he was sad to admit.

IV

One morning he read in his newspaper that Terry Hammersmith was in town; there was Terry's picture, plump, with nose-glasses and the most benevolent of smiles. Lanny hadn't seen this budding bureaucrat since the month of June 1919, when they had been part of a dissident group which dined together to discuss the newly concluded treaty of Versailles. They had to decide whether it was their duty to resign in protest against its many departures from the Fourteen Points. Terry had been one of those who made evasive speeches and decided to stay on and make the best of things; now he was having his reward, being Co-ordinator of the P.D.Q., or whatever the alphabetical combination was which had just been formed to integrate six other assorted groups which had been stumbling over one another's initials for the past year or two.

Lanny thought: "Here's a chance to find out about the New Deal!" He telephoned, and after some difficulty got the busy official on the wire, and they gave each other verbal slaps on the back. Terry must have heard about Irma Barnes, and wouldn't fail to be impressed. "Meet me somewhere for lunch," said the prince consort, "and tell me about your job."

The guest was late, because he had been at an important conference. He was bubbling over with energy and enthusiasm. He was making over the world, and the happiness of many thousands depended upon his efforts; it gave him a sense of exhilaration. Lanny got from his talk the impression that the New Deal consisted of many well-meaning persons pulling and hauling, each against the

others. Terry had just emerged victorious from a titanic struggle for power. He had managed to get to the "Big Chief," and had presented an outline for a reorganization of his own and other bureaus. "Honestly, old man, you could have knocked me over with a feather when I learned that my plan had been accepted and that I was to have full charge! Of course the problem now is whether I can manage to persuade the others to co-operate, or whether I'll have to get a new staff."

Lanny tried to find out what it was all about, but his friends described so many trees that Lanny couldn't get a clear idea of the forest, and wasn't sure if his friend had it either. Presently he was surprised by a proposal: "Listen, old boy, why don't you come in with us?"

"You mean, take a job?"

"I'd be delighted to have you, and you could be tremendously useful."

"But, Terry, I haven't had any experience!"

"Very few of us have, at this kind of work. We learn as we go along. Of course the pay isn't high, but you 'probably don't need it."

"I'm afraid I'm not adapted to a settled job, Terry. I'm not a particularly good judge of men, and I don't believe I'd be a success at giving orders."

"The main thing is that you're honest, and your heart would be in it. We have to train a whole staff of men in disinterested public service, and if they make mistakes on the way, that can't be helped. You know as well as I do that this thing isn't going backwards; all private industry has got to become a public service—but we can't do it until we have trained men and got them ready to take responsibility as the emergencies arise. It's hard work, but it's a lot of fun, really."

Lanny listened with one half of his brain, and with the other half he thought: "What a joke it would be on Robbie! I wonder how he'd take it!" He thought, "I wonder how I'd get along with Irma. That might be a solution of our problem; if I took a government job, it would be respectable and make an impression on her." But then he thought about Trudi in Paris, and what would she do for funds? She couldn't keep up her work on what Lanny could spare from the six or eight thousand dollars a government job would pay. He thought about Raoul and the school, and about Rick, and the other people he would never see if he tied himself down to a desk in Washington.

"I'm sorry, Terry," he said. "It all sounds alluring, and some

day I may fall for it ; but right now I've got a job that I think is important. I've made promises that don't leave me free. I'll drop in once in a while when I'm in America and find out how things are going with you."

V

Back at Shore Acres the young lord of the manor found a cablegram just being delivered ; a message that was like a blow over his heart. It was from his mother, and read :

" Marceline eloped with Vittorio left farewell note not stating destination am prostrated what shall I do ? "

It seemed to Lanny that his world was falling to pieces, stone after stone. He could think of few things worse that could have happened to one whom he still regarded as a child. His conscience smote him because he hadn't tried harder to prevent it ; because he had gone away and left her in this peril. He had been neglecting all his different families, his different homes, while trying to solve the problems of a world which didn't want his help and wouldn't take his advice.

He hesitated only a few minutes over his reply. He had done some investigating into the marriage laws of the Continent while trying to get married to Irma, and he knew that Marceline couldn't get married in Western Europe without her mother's consent ; also a birth certificate was requisite, and a period of delay which varied in the different countries. This ill-assorted couple would be conspicuous wherever they went and it should be possible to find them. He cabled :

" Advise you notify police endeavour intercept prevent calamity disregard scandal absolutely necessary avert wreck of child's life you alone can act."

Having sent this, Lanny telephoned his father. He had already told Robbie about the Capitano and so not much conversation was required. Robbie agreed with his son and would send an urgent message. Several hours later Lanny received a reply saying that his mother had done what he advised ; so next afternoon the New York papers carried a delightful item from Cannes regarding an elopement in the highest circles of that socially prominent town. You cannot expect to bask in the limelight while you are happy, and have it instantaneously turned off when you happen to get into trouble. Having done everything possible to make herself and her daughter conspicuous only two or three weeks ago, Beauty Budd couldn't dodge the consequences now.

Being married to the eloping débutante's half-brother, Irma Barnes Budd was in the news stories, and her telephone was being rung by reporters. Having been brought up in café society, she wasn't worried by it. "After all, Lanny," she remarked, "running away with an army captain and war hero, the nephew of a marchesa, isn't exactly the same thing as if it were the family chauffeur. It's all right to try to stop them, but if you find they've got away with it, take my advice and put a bold face on it." Lanny realized that the phrase "Fascist aviator" was different in Irma's ears from what it was on his lips. To him it was a term of odium, and the performance of dropping bombs on helpless "niggers" was far from glorious—but Irma found excuses for Mussolini as she did for Hitler, and there was no use raising the issue again.

In the course of the day came another message from Bienvenu, reading:

"Couple sailed from Marseille steamer *Firenze* bound New York married at sea do meet them probably penniless."

So there was another blow over Lanny's heart. For six or seven years the story of how Irma and he had outwitted the Archbishop of Canterbury by getting on board a vessel more than ten miles out at sea and being married by the captain—that delightful anecdote had been a part of the Budd family legend. Of course Marceline remembered it, and had been able to tell her lover how to get around the stringent laws which Napoleon Bonaparte had devised for the protection of the French family and its property. The young couple had found out about an Italian steamer and had scraped together the cost of their passage. Probably they had sailed as a married couple and, after the vessel was at sea and away from French jurisdiction, they had appealed to or bribed the captain to make their presence regular. Best feature of all, from the point of view of the rascal pair, was the fact that Irma and Lanny would be completely barred from criticism; if either ventured it, they would only have to look innocent and say: "But we thought it was the right thing to do."

Chi ' g home to rpost!

VI

"Of course you're absolutely bound to meet them"—so declared the mistress of Shore Acres. "I must go along—that's the only way to keep it from being a scandal."

"It's pretty tough on you, Irma," he remarked.

"I've lived in your mother's home about half my married life

and been treated as a daughter. What sort of person would I be to refuse shelter to my young sister-in-law ? ”

“ You mean to invite her here ? ”

“ What else can I do, decently ? ”

“ Well, it’s up to you, Irma. I want you to know that I’m not asking it.”

“ What on earth would you propose ? ”

“ I would make it plain to that fellow that he has to take her back to Italy and earn a living for her.”

“ But you say he’s been wounded in the war, Lanny ! Surely you can’t expect him to go to work until he’s had a chance to recuperate ! ”

“ He’s recuperated enough for love-making, and he’s coming here because he’s been told that you have a lot of money and aren’t stingy with it.”

“ Are you sure you’re not prejudiced against the man ? It seems to me unlikely that a Fascist could win your approval by anything he did, either in war or peace. The fair thing is for me to meet him, and see what I make of him, and what chance there is that he can make Marceline happy.”

No small joke on Lanny Budd, who had been glad to get away from Bienvenu because he so greatly disliked the *sacro egoismo*—and now the damned thing was moving in on his other home, the place where he had been hoping to enjoy the company of his little daughter. He understood and to some extent had foreseen what was happening to him—he was being ousted from his world. “ Give me a fulcrum and a long enough lever and I can move the earth ”—so Archimedes is said to have remarked. Adi Schicklgruber had made himself a long, long lever, and with it he had reached out and pried Lanny Budd, first from the Meissner home and then from his wife’s bed. And now came the Blessed Little Pouter Pigeon with a crowbar to pry him out of Shore Acres, and perhaps later out of Bienvenu—for surely Lanny wouldn’t find any pleasure in living there if Vit
ian Gifolamo was going to be the co-cock of the roost.

VII

The American heiress had visited the Führer in his eyrie, and had pledged her sympathy and support. Was it likely that so competent and tireless a propagandist as Adi would overlook this opening ? Would he fail to drop a memorandum to his publicity man, the crooked little Reichsminister Doktor Goebbels, who also knew the

heiress and her prince consort and had had them as guests in his home? No, indeed! Lanny had been anticipating results from that scene in the Berghof, and wondering what form they would take.

While they were waiting for Marceline's steamer to arrive, the wife said: "Lanny, I have company for dinner this evening, and I want to be sure it will be agreeable to you."

"Bless your heart!" he replied. "I'm not censoring your guest list. Who is it?"

"Forrest Quadratt, the poet."

"Never heard of him; but that may be my fault."

"He's well known in New York, I'm told; he came to me with a letter from Donnerstein."

"A German?"

"American born of German parents. He divides his time between the two countries, trying to interpret each to the other."

"Is he a Nazi?"

"I suppose you would call him that. He prefers to be known as a man of letters."

"That is understandable. Have you told him about my views?"

"Not a word. I promised, and I've kept the promise."

"Well, I'm perfectly willing to meet him. Unless you'd rather I went to town, of course."

"Not at all; I'll be interested in your reaction to him. But I didn't want to subject you to boredom without warning."

"Thanks, dear," he said. It wasn't so different from being husband and wife. "Have you any of his writings?"

"He gave me a book, but I haven't had time to more than glance into it. It's mostly about love, and my guess is you won't approve it."

"I ought to be able to stand it if you can," he replied, with a smile. She got the thin volume, *Eros Unbound*. Lanny looked at the date and saw that it was more than thirty years ago. "Is he an old man?"

"About fifty, I should guess. He has a wife and some grown children in New York." Irma didn't say whether she had met them, and tact forbade Lanny to inquire.

It was the poetry of youthful decadence, a fruit that was rotten before it was ripe. The poet sang the futility of living before he had had time to begin; he identified himself with all the empires which had fallen, with the roses which had withered before they had bloomed. He was sad beyond words, but he had chosen the words with care and knew they were right; he had the gift of melody, and sang in lilting verses the futility of singing. In short, he was the

product of a society which was sick and knew nothing but its own sickness.

Forrest Quadratt in person proved to be rather small and slender, near-sighted and peering out through thick-lensed glasses ; his hand was soft when you took it ; his hair was gray, his manner gentle, his voice rather melancholy. It was the old-world charm which Lanny knew so well. He disliked the man, but could see that he would have an attraction for women, and that the many romantic adventures of which his poetry boasted might easily have occurred. He was widely read, had a sense of humour, and talked rapidly and nervously, as if he was afraid his witticisms might be anticipated. What did he want with a woman of half his years and very little culture ? Was it that she was very rich, or was it that her husband had been absent when the visitor had called ?

Forrest Quadratt took it for granted that he was among sympathizers. He explained that he had once been a poet, perhaps the greatest of his time, but the flame had burned out and he knew better than to try to rekindle it. Now he was what the world disparagingly called a "propagandist" ; as the heir of two cultures, he was trying to interpret his own land to the land of his forefathers, and vice versa. He wanted to introduce Emerson to Goethe and Goethe to Emerson. Two master-peoples, each fitted to organize and guide a hemisphere ; two nations which ought to be not rivals, but co-operators—and would be when they understood each other's ideals and destinies.

So it went : the old Nazi guff, but embodied in beautifully chosen words, spoken in a refined voice with no trace of accent. Lanny thought : "Goebbels has made a good choice ! I wonder what he is paying for it." Lanny thought : "He'll get Irma's money, and be the guiding spirit of the salon she is dreaming about. Will he win her love, too ? He'll try, of course. Wife and children won't stand in his way." From that was only a short leap of the mind to the question : "Is it my business to stay and interfere ? Shall I try—or will it only mean another quarrel ?"

VIII

The steamer *Firenze* came in, and Irma and Lanny were at the pier, but found that the elopers were no longer on board. From the captain of the vessel they learned that the pair were married, but the bride had no passports or papers of any sort, therefore they were being held at Ellis Island, and Marceline might be shipped back on

the steamer's return. The newspaper reporters had gone down to meet the vessel in the harbour, and the couple had been stood up on deck and photographed. It wasn't long before afternoon newspapers were on the streets with the picturesque story.

Irma was indignant ; she took it as an insult to her family that a relative even by marriage should be detained like a common peasant girl. She insisted on phoning her lawyer and having him go with her to Ellis Island at once ; Lanny tagged along, because refusal would have been a public repudiation of his half-sister. The Fascist aviator was a hero in the eyes of most of New York's Italians as well as of all lovers of newspaper romance ; as soon as the reporters learned that the heiress and former glamour girl was interested in the case, it became a front-page story, and every hour's development was followed by the press. The daughter of a famous French painter had committed no crime against the august United States government, and was a lawfully wedded wife ; surely therefore she was entitled to the hospitality of her mother's native land !

The learned lawyer and the Immigration Commissioner between them uncovered an amusing set of complications. Apparently under the Italian law she was a citizen of Italy ; under the French law she was a citizen of France, and under the United States law she was in a delicate and embarrassing situation. Her status was governed by the United States law of 1907, and if at the time of her birth her mother was married to her father she was a citizen of France ; if, on the other hand, she could claim to be illegitimate, she could enjoy the citizenship of her mother, which was American. The fact that she had just married an Italian would not make any difference, because under the act of 1922 marriage would not affect her citizenship status. " Under that law a woman becomes a citizen in her own right and does not derive or lose her citizenship by marriage "—so declared the august Commissioner.

Lanny had to admit that he had been present at the marriage of his mother to the French painter nearly two years before Marceline was born ; so the situation looked dark indeed. The only way to establish Marceline's right to enter the great port of New York was to have Congress pass an act establishing her as an American citizen. Irma was quite prepared to undertake that, but unfortunately it might take considerable time, so the legal authorities agreed. However, the skies cleared when the suggestion was made that Marceline might come in as a visitor. She and her husband could stay for six months, and that permission could be extended by the Attorney General.

Since the husband had a satisfactory passport visa, all that his

wife would require would be some "travel document," and the Commissioner said he would be satisfied with an affidavit from the captain of the ship stating that the couple had been married by him. Then if Mrs. Irma Barnes Budd would consent to put up a bond of five hundred dollars to guarantee that her relative by marriage would not try to remain permanently in the country, the Commissioner would issue a visitor's visa allowing her to remain six months. "I will put up a bond for five hundred thousand if necessary," declared the haughty heiress; and so at last the persecuted young couple emerged from their island cage.

It was like a stage entrance, carefully built up; just enough uncertainty and delay to fan curiosity into a blaze. All Irma's friends wanted to meet the runaway pair; if they visited a country club everyone turned to look at them, if they entered a night-club the limelight was turned upon them. Marceline was walking on the clouds—having suddenly come into possession of everything of which she had been dreaming. The reporters followed her up; when they learned that she was a dancer, they took more pictures of her, and she could have had a stage engagement if she hadn't been on a honeymoon. She expected Lanny to dance with her, and it would have been unkind of him to refuse.

Meanwhile here was the wounded Fascist hero, dignified, aristocratic, taking his honours not for himself but for the cause which he served. His talk was much like that of Quadratt, except that he had a different prospectus of the world's future. There were to be not two great empires, but three. While the Germans moved eastward to destroy Bolshevism, that would leave the Balkans and the Mediterranean area for the newly awakened Italian race. Ultimately Germany would have Asia and Italy would have Africa. This would leave for the United States not merely Canada and Mexico, but the whole of Central and South America, and what more could any reasonable people want? It seemed entirely satisfactory to the ladies and gentlemen to whom the Capitano explained it, and this included the heiress of the Barnes fortune, which he had as good as married.

IX

There were now two crowbars working on the prince consort, and it seemed to him they had broken every root which bound him to this sumptuous estate. All except the poor little Frances root! Did he want to carry her off to Bienvenu and take care of her? Was he prepared to give up his other activities and devote himself to

raising a child? He knew it would really be Beauty who would do the raising, and in Marceline he saw what the end product would be. The child was happy where she was, and he had no choice but to leave her here.

Lanny read in the newspapers that the Frente Popular had won a great victory in the Spanish elections; he pictured Raoul exulting over that. Also, Laval had been ousted in France, and the Front Populaire, as it was called in French, was putting up an electoral campaign which should be a spectacle. There came a note from Trudi, saying that she had new sketches to show him. He had been visiting some of his clients and obtaining orders and commissions, so there was money in sight. It was time for him to move on.

Was he going without any sort of overture to his wife? He had thought of a dozen approaches and dropped them one after another. She seemed entirely satisfied with Forrest Quadratt as mentor, and with the new brother-in-law and his bride as playmates. She found the Capitano convincing as a hero, praised him to all comers and was pleased by their approval. What fault was there to find with the man—except that he didn't happen to agree with Lanny's subversive ideas? The fact that there was a conflict between the Teuton dream and the Latin made no impression upon Irma's mind; her genius did not lie in the field of world statecraft, and she was satisfied with the vague formula that both Italy and Germany were poor nations, badly crowded and compelled to find room in which to expand.

Lanny could take his licking, of course; he could say: "I am sorry, old girl; I have been rather silly, and I'm ready to quit. I'll have to be polite to my Red relatives, of course, but I won't give them any encouragement, and I'll drop all the other people that make you unhappy." He could say that with good grace, and Irma would open her arms to him. Neither had spoken any irrevocable word, neither had committed any unforgivable act; they would be as they had been in the beginning. He might even propose a bargain: "I'll give up my Reds and Pinks if you'll give up your Nazis and Fascists. Hand the young honeymooners a cheque and ship them off to Italy. Tell Quadratt you are busy. Let's cut out all disputers and all subjects of dispute."

What would Irma reply? He pictured her happiness and relief. "These people mean nothing to me," she would say. "I just wanted you to see how I feel when I see you with people I dislike and fear." They would seal their bargain with kisses, and Lanny would be the prince consort for the rest of his life, with art experting as an agreeable side line, and security for all his family and friends. He could have a private yacht, a private orchestra, a private anything.

He could go in for charity, helping the worthy poor. He could endow psychic research and perhaps make discoveries which would be of permanent importance. Anything in the world, so long as he didn't try to undermine the pillars of a public utility king's fortune ; so long as he didn't impair the value of those bales of stocks and bonds hidden a couple of hundred feet below the sidewalk of one of the great Wall Street banks.

But no, he didn't believe in that fortune, he didn't believe in any great fortune or other form of vested privilege. Therefore he must abdicate and retire, and it was up to him to do so gracefully, in the modern, light-hearted manner. " Well, darling, it's time for me to be toddling. I've had a pleasant holiday and I'm in your debt. I wish I were a better husband, but you know we leopards cannot change our spots. Take good care of yourself and don't let the gobble-uns git you ! " He wouldn't have to elaborate ; she could guess that the " gobble-uns " were Nazis and Fascists, and she would pay just as much attention to his warnings as his " Little Sister " had done.

X

Zoltan was in London and Lanny had business there, so he cabled that he was coming and engaged a passage to Southampton. He thought of saving money for Trudi by going second cabin ; but no, he had to meet the " right " people, and a steamship was as likely a place as any ; if he were a second-class passenger he would become a second-class art expert, and now of all times he had to keep up his morale.

He knew nobody on board, and was content to read and to pace the windy deck and ponder his future ; but others soon found out who he was, and the ladies tried to rope him in for bridge and conversation. Young ones, bright-eyed and full of chatter, or soft-eyed and shy ; middle-aged ones not having given up hope ; they knew that he was married, but also they knew about Reno and were willing to take a chance. A handsome young man travelling alone, and saying that he was on the business of purchasing old masters—well, they were pleased to learn about this distinguished occupation, and when he made it plain that he served only the very rich and discerning they were impressed. Before the steamer docked, he had a wealthy widow from Chicago begging to be made acquainted with great art in London, and willing to pay any price to a teacher.

Two days before leaving Shore Acres, Lanny had run over to Newcastle to say good-bye and had learned that the last of the

Budd-Erling Py's had left that day on a fast cargo boat for Bremen. The fat General had been so eager to get them that he had had his men in the plant watching production and begging for speed; they had dispensed with most of the customary tests and had put down the cash and taken into their own hands the job of loading the planes. Robbie Budd hadn't known what all this was about, but Lanny found out the morning he reached London, for the newspapers had placards with letters a foot high: "HITLER MARCHES!"

It was the Führer's move into the Rhineland, long planned and carefully staged; on a Saturday, as usual, so that British statesmen would be paralysed! He had put his troops on the road at dawn, and made public announcement to his assembled Reichstag at noon. As always, whenever he made a military move, it was in the cause of peace. This time he repeated it: "Peace! Peace!" With a perfectly straight face he declared: "We have no territorial demands to make on Europe." He called upon the men of the German Reichstag to "unite in two holy inner confessions: First, we swear to yield to no force whatever in the restoration of the honour of our people, and prefer to succumb with honour to the severest hardships rather than capitulate. Second, we confess that now, more than ever, we shall strive for an understanding between European peoples, especially for one with our western neighbour nations."

What he was doing was obvious: preparing to fortify this strategic border, so that he would be able to hold the French while attacking Poland and Czechoslovakia. Lanny Budd, along with every thinking person in Europe, knew that the fate of the old Continent was being decided that Saturday. Were Britain and France going to stop him or were they going to surrender to him? Under the Versailles pact, Britain, France, Belgium, and Italy were pledged to prevent this specific action. "The maintenance and the assembly of armed forces, either permanently or temporarily," was declared to be "a hostile act" against all the powers, and they were obligated to resist it. Hitler knew this so well that he had given his commanders orders to fall back at once if they met with opposition from the French; this while he was proclaiming to the Reichstag: "We swear to yield to no force whatever."

XI

Lanny was so excited that he forgot his own business, and phoned to Rick, who came to town by the next train. He tried to telephone Wickthorpe at Downing Street, but the report was that His Lord-

ship was away for the week-end, and later that he was on his way to town. Rick wanted to send telegrams to everybody he knew; he wanted to call a meeting and make a speech, to organize a parade and carry a banner. But at the same time he was in despair; he said: "It's all fixed up. Lord Londonderry has been to Berlin, and dined with Ribbentrop, and with Göring, and then with Hitler, and they have filled him full of the idea that they mean to put down Bolshevism and are the only ones who can do it."

The only hope was an appeal to labour and other anti-Nazi forces. But the trouble was, you were calling for war, and labour was pacifist and looked askance upon all "warmongers"—especially those whose fathers were selling military planes! Lanny found it in London as in Paris: the Right was militant, while the Left was using words. As if Hitler cared about their words! Hitler had thirty-five thousand troops in the Rhineland by Sunday night, and ninety thousand by the middle of the week; he paced the floor of his Chancellery, rubbing his hands with glee while the French statesmen argued in an agony of fear and uncertainty. They were afraid of German bombers over Paris; they were afraid of the several billions it would cost to mobilize the Army—and precisely while they were struggling to save the franc, and losing gold every day!

Late on Saturday night the French Cabinet announced that France was appealing to the League Council. All the world knew what that meant: Hitler had got away with it! On Sunday morning Lanny and Rick had the agony of reading the rejoicings in the Tory press of Britain, which was for all practical purposes a Fascist press and came out with editorial hymns celebrating the fact that "Locarno" was dead and "sanctions" also, and Britons were not going to die to help the ally of Soviet Russia. Several months earlier they had been rejoicing because Britons weren't going to die to open the way for the Reds in Italy. On Monday the Prime Minister of Britain told the House: "We have no more desire than to keep calm, to keep our heads, and to try to bring France and Germany together in a friendship with ourselves."

Tragic hours for two clear-sighted men of the Left! On Monday the League Council condemned Germany's action; whereupon began a long exchange of protocols and demands upon Germany, sickening in their futility. Perfectly marvellous how many formalities and rigmaroles they could invent, how many pretexts for delay and talk, while Hitler poured his labour battalions into the Rhineland and set them to work digging fortifications day and night. You could see the white lights of the construction jobs blazing across the river, and in a few weeks they would have barred Germany away

from the French armies, and the rest of Europe would belong to the Nazis. The French Premier and the Foreign Minister came to London with their staffs and got just what they had given to the British five months previously. You let us down in the matter of Lake Tsana, and now it's tit for tat. How do you like it, *messieurs les mangeurs de grenouilles*?

XII

Lanny attended to his picture business and then wrote Trudi Schultz, making an appointment in Paris. She was the first person he wanted to see, and the only one in all France to whom he could talk with complete frankness. He found her all but in tears over what had happened, and he had no comfort to give her concerning the attitude of Britain. Hard, hard men were in control of that empire; silk-hatted savages, Rick had called them. They thought about their class and their class privileges, their property and their property system, and they thought about little else in the world. Their system was threatened in every country, and they were frightened, and hated what they feared. Class had become more than country, and the enemy at home more to be dreaded than anyone abroad.

The success of Hitler's coup was, of course, a setback for Trudi and her friends, and might add years to the work they had to do. Lanny said: "It's no good fooling ourselves about it. We may none of us live to see the end of what Adi is building. This victory will make him into a master-magician to the Germans. So we've got to go back and take a fresh start, and plan a long war."

Lanny heard his friend's story of her activities, and told her the outcome of his visit to Shore Acres. Very sad, but no help for it, and that book was closed. He couldn't live in Irma's world nor she in his, and neither desired to try.

They drove out into the country, and strolled and saw the signs of spring underfoot and overhead. Life was renewing itself, even on the banks of the River Marne, which twice during the late unpleasantness had run red with blood of French patriots. It was pretty sure to happen again, Lanny said. The intelligence of men was not equal to management of the huge societies they had built; their moral sense was not powerful enough to restrain the weapons of destruction they had invented. "We social organizers are a tiny group," he said, "and we are going to be rolled over by the tanks."

What was Trudi going to do with her life? She couldn't live entirely alone, hiding in a wilderness of bricks and tiles and thinking

about nothing but the composing and distributing of anti-Nazi literature. That way she would surely be an object of suspicion to her neighbours in time of stress ; she would be much safer, Lanny advised, if she took up some sort of normal life as a camouflage. " Doesn't your drawing interest you any more ? "

" It would," she said, " if I could do it for the cause."

" Do it without labelling it," he suggested. " Use a little cunning as our enemies do. Why not get a studio in Montmartre or over on the Left Bank and be one artist among thousands ? Call yourself an Austrian, if you like, and no one will pay any attention to you, in war or peace. Now and then you can disappear for a few hours and meet your underground friends. This will be pleasanter for me, because I can come to see you when I'm in Paris and we won't have to meet on street corners."

" What are you planning to do, Lanny ? "

" My home on the Cap will be a quiet place for a while," he replied. " My mother will reconcile herself to what she cannot help, and I will write letters and make as much money as I can for our propaganda. I'll spend my leisure time in the company of Beethoven and Liszt and some other old friends. I have a library of books which I've been telling myself I'd like to find time to read : Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia*, *War and Peace* and *Jean-Christophe*—I could compile quite a list. We've got to wall ourselves in, Trudi, and learn to hibernate like the bears ; to live on our own intellectual and spiritual substance. There's a long winter ahead of us—and it may be an ice age, who can say ? "

BOOK FIVE

A TIDE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN

18

Fears of the Brave

I

LIFE was peaceful and pleasant at Bienvenu in that early spring of 1936. Nature put on her annual fashion show, and the court of the Villa was a bower of blossoms, the haunt of bees and butterflies. The fruit trees all over the estate became silent explosions of pink and white. In his studio Lanny played his music and read his books; Parsifal wandered about, meditating, or sat in a shady nook saying his prayers; Beauty played bridge with her friends, and combated her unrelenting lifelong enemy, the demon of *embonpoint*. Her share in the season's gaiety was modest, because she no longer had Irma's purse. Emily wasn't well enough to manage big parties, so Beauty would go up to Sept Chênes and arrange dinners and dances, thus helping to maintain the good name of the Coast of Pleasure.

Lanny Budd, bachelor *pro tem.*, evaded playfully all questions regarding his affairs. This was annoying to the ladies he met, for how could they know what attitude to take to him, either for themselves or for their daughters? He was an eligible man, provided he was going to stay away from his wife and let her get a divorce in the normal way. But was he? And she? Nobody seemed to be sure. Cannes and Long Island are three thousand miles apart, but are connected by cables and wireless, and the gossip columns at each end of the line concerned themselves with the problem. Apparently the couple had quietly uncoupled themselves, and were going on living as if there were no such thing as love and marriage in the world. But all writers of gossip columns know that the case is otherwise.

Lanny would stay at home as much as he could. When his mother begged hard enough, he would dress and take her to a party; he would dance with her, and with his hostess; then, considering his duty done, he would stroll into the smoking-room or on to the

loggia and engage in conversation with gentlemen who were on the inside of affairs. What were the prospects of the coming elections ? Was there a chance of victory for the *canaille*, and if it happened, what were the holders of property going to do about it ? What were the consequences of the new laws forbidding political organizations to wear uniforms or to carry arms ? What would be the effect of the statement of Colonel de la Roque, pledging the Croix de Feu to legality in its procedures ? Was it true that the Jeunesses Patriotes was rapidly taking membership away from its rival organization as a result of the Colonel's *gaffe* ?

The grandson of Budd's had been strongly suspected of Leftist leanings, and had been wont to make cynical remarks about the *status quo* ; but now, as he explained, he had come to realize that political affairs are not the proper field for art lovers, and he had adopted a spectator's role in the great European tug-o'-war. That was a normal development at the age of thirty-six, and especially after one has married a fortune ; members of the two hundred families vacationing on the Riviera found nothing suspicious about it, and avowed freely their intention under no circumstances to submit to the domination of the "doggerly," no matter what majority of votes it might cast. They complained of the rapacity of their political representatives—who, for political purposes, denominated themselves "Radical Socialists."

If later on some of this information leaked into *Le Populaire* of Paris, and from there filtered down into lesser political sheets and into speeches at *réunions*, nobody ever thought of Lanny Budd in this connection. The men of great affairs expressed themselves to many persons, and it is characteristic of civil wars that leaks are frequent, the antagonists being so mixed up together and espionage and intrigue so easy. Anyhow, nobody reads what appears in the Pink and Red rags ; they make clever guesses and don't hesitate to advance them as facts. They say ? What say they ? Let them say !

II

Rick in one of his letters wrote : "Ceddy has gone to Washington. I suppose we are trying to get some sort of commitment in support of sanctions, just in case. At least that is what the pater hears in the clubs."

When Lanny read that to his mother, she said : "Tommy rot ! He's gone there after Irma !"

There had come a cordial letter from Fanny Barnes, inviting the

other grandmother to spend the summer at Shore Acres and offering her a cottage. Lanny pointed out : " They would hardly do that if Irma was expecting to be carrying on another courtship."

The mother's response was : " By summer she'll be in Reno."

Beauty made a note of this, and so she got a melancholy satisfaction when several friends in England and on the Continent sent her an item from the *Tatler*, reporting that the fourteenth Earl of Wickthorpe was a guest of Mrs. Irma Barnes Budd on Long Island, New York, while that lady's husband was sojourning on the estate of his mother at Juan-les-Pins, on the Cap d'Antibes. " You see what I told you ! " cried Beauty. " You are losing her, Lanny ! "

" It's a load off my mind," answered the incorrigible one. " I was afraid it might be a German-American poet."

" Oh, Lanny, how crude of you ! "

" Irma is bound to marry again, I take it ; and Caddy is a gentleman—something of a dub, to be sure, but the same sort that she is. When you take time to think it over, you'll decide that having Frances the stepdaughter of an earl is not so bad. I don't know what it will make you, but it ought to be some sort of an Honourable."

Beauty saw fit to ignore this unseemly persiflage. " Your mind is quite made up to losing her, Lanny ? "

" Her mind is made up, and that's enough. I can only say that I'd rather see the mother of Frances happy than otherwise, and I'm advising you to go there and exhibit that *savoir-faire* for which you have become celebrated."

Beauty had had half a year in which to get her thoughts adjusted to this calamity, and she hated to admit that she had succeeded. However, she took a plunge. " Lanny can't you bring yourself to talk frankly to your mother ? "

" I'd love to—if only you'd make up your mind that I'm going to be what I am and not what you'd like me to be."

" Stop scolding me, and answer honestly : Do you expect to get along indefinitely without a woman in your life ? "

" I have no such long-range programme. It so happens that I've had an overdose of matrimony of a sort that I let other people push me into. Now I'm going to take a rest, and when I start looking again, it'll be for the sort of woman I want and not the sort that anybody else thinks I ought to want."

" Have you any idea what that sort would be ? "

" It's so simple that it sounds childish : some woman who is interested in the same things that I'm interested in."

" Tell me honestly : Is it that woman you helped out of Germany ? "

Lanny guessed that she had extracted some information from his father. "Bless your heart," he replied, "that woman happens to have a husband in a concentration camp, or so she believes, and her life is centred on the idea of saving him."

"You are planning to assist her?"

"I would be, except that I think the chances are a hundred to one that he is dead."

"And if she ever decides that he's dead, what then?"

Lanny thought for a while.

"Please, dear," she pleaded. "Trust your mother as you used to do in the old days!"

"The matter is confidential in a way that I cannot even explain."

"Lanny, I will pledge my word of honour not to speak about the matter to anybody but you. I want to know if my son is in love, and if so, with what sort of woman."

"I'm not in love with her. I've thought about it a lot, naturally. I realize that I am two persons and live in two worlds. I like to play around, as I've always done; then sometimes I have an impulse to work for a cause. I ask myself: 'Do I want to do either all the time?' I read about Jeanne d'Arc and I'm tremendously thrilled, I think that life is holy and marvellous. But if I found myself falling in love with Jeanne d'Arc, I'd begin to wonder if I could stand it. I might get tired of hearing her voices, and want to get off and hear my own for a while."

"You have such a high opinion of this woman?"

"Sometimes I think of Florence Nightingale, and then again of Barbara Pugliese, the Italian Syndicalist who made such an impression on me when I was young. She, too, was a consecrated soul, and I was inspired to be like her. But now I wonder if I'm good enough. I've had things too easy for too many years, and I'm afraid my moral fibre is soft." Lanny paused for a moment and then added: "You ought to understand, because you have felt that way about Parsifal—at least you've said so."

"I really felt it," declared the mother humbly. "But it's so hard to give things up!"

"I was caught in a jam where I had to help this woman or else be a cad, and so I did what I could. But I ask myself: 'Do I want to go on doing things like that?' At once I start making excuses and telling myself it isn't my war."

"But, Lanny, how *can* it be?" The frightened mother put her heart into that cry.

"It keeps coming nearer and nearer. I shouldn't wonder

if, before we got through, it would be every decent man's war."

III

There was the Italian Riviera, the French and the Spanish Riviéras ; one continuous stretch of coast fronting on the same blue sea, and with mountains sheltering it from the north winds. The same climate and the same activities, catching the same fish, growing the same olives and oranges and grapes ; the same kinds of people, well mixed through the centuries, and speaking dialects of the same Latin. Also, in each of the three nations was the same deadly and incessant struggle between rich and poor ; between those who owned the land and working capital and those who did the hard labour for starvation wages.

Naturally these nations were interested in one another's affairs ; when the ladies and gentlemen of Lanny's world got tired of talking about French political prospects they talked about what was happening in Italy and Spain. A railway ran along this coast, and boats large and small came and went on the sea ; through the centuries it had been the practice of refugees driven out of one section to flee to another. France, being in the middle, got most of these victims of persecution. For the past decade and a half it had been the poor and their partisans escaping from Italy ; now, after a turn of the wheel of fortune, it was the rich escaping from Spain.

The arguments in Lanny's circle were hot and grew hotter every day. What were the comfortable classes to do ? In Italy they had got themselves a protector and committed their affairs into his hands. That he had once been the reddest of the Reds was all to the good, for thus he knew their talk and how to delude them. He had restored order, cleaned up the streets, and made the trains to run on time ; now, having got the homeland in order, he was setting out to expand his territory. To most people in Lanny's world this seemed the normal procedure. Savages were meant to be subdued and put to work—what good were they otherwise, to themselves or anybody else ? When Il Duce's sons dropped mustard gas from aeroplanes among barefooted black soldiers and thus put them to rout, they were proving themselves superior beings, and the swift march of their army into the mountain heights was one more case of the survival of the fittest.

If you wanted to see the other side of the picture, travel west instead of east along this Côte d'Azur. The Spanish dictator hadn't been " firm " enough, the polite way of saying that he hadn't killed

enough peasants and workers. The Reds had been allowed to conduct a political campaign and to win—and now look at the results! A jurist of a Pink tinge, Azaña, had become President, and thirty thousand agitators and trouble-makers, thrown into jail by the old regime, had been suddenly turned loose upon the community. The results could have been foreseen by anyone; the newspapers of France featured monasteries being burned, and peasant labourers proceeding to divide up the land, plow and plant it. Great Spanish landlords packed up their families and shipped them to France; here they were, camped in the hotels and villas of Cannes, in a mood receptive to tea-parties, dinner-dances, and other forms of elegant entertainment.

So it came about that Lanny Budd, without any effort on his part, was in a position to learn about the Spanish governing classes, what they were saying, doing, and planning. They told him they hadn't the slightest idea of adopting permanent residence abroad or of submitting to the loss of their estates and other privileges. They were going to fight for what they had been brought up to consider their rights. They had left their young and active men at home, and their older and wiser heads had gone on confidential missions to Paris and London, and more especially to Rome and Berlin, from which places they expected the strongest support. Those on the Riviera received letters and talked freely about the contents. For after all, we people *du gratin* form one fraternity, from whatever part of the world we come; we have the same tastes, enjoy the same pleasures, fear the same pains; it would be strange indeed if we could not trust one another, and receive at least moral support in times of distress and danger.

IV

Lanny would call up Raoul Palma and take him for a drive somewhere back in the hills, safe from prying eyes and ears. He would say: "Do your friends in Spain have any idea of what is going on in their army and even in their government? Do they know there is a deputation of reactionaries from Madrid now sitting in with Mussolini and working out the details of a revolt; being told just how much money they have to raise and what supplies of munitions they can count upon? Do they know that General Sanjurjo is in Berlin on the same errand, and that when they have got all the problems straightened out there is going to be a *coup d'état*, as certain as to-morrow's sunrise?"

"I have heard these reports, Lanny, and have written to all the comrades I know; no doubt they hear it from other sources. But you know how our kind of people are; we don't like violence and find it hard to believe in. Very sadly I'm beginning to wonder if we Socialists aren't caught between two millstones and destined to be ground up. We think that when we've educated the people and got a majority of the votes, the matter is settled. That is supposed to be the rule in the political game."

"It wasn't played that way by Mussolini and Hitler, and they're just started on their careers. Mussolini has backed the League down on sanctions, so he says: 'That's the way to do it; scare the wits out of the dotards and their knees give way.'"

"Do you really believe that England and France would let Mussolini and Hitler overthrow our legally elected government in Spain?"

"We mustn't depend upon capitalist statesmen. We must have our own ways of reaching the masses and teaching them to defend their interests."

"But, Lanny, I'm told that the British have great investments in Spanish mines—iron ore and copper and mercury."

"The capitalists make gentlemen's agreements and respect one another's interests. Look at how the French and Germans protected the steel plants of the Briey Basin during the war. British capitalists don't want a Left government in Spain; they'd be afraid of severance taxes. They want what they call a strong government, one that holds labour down and puts the taxes on the consumer."

"Lanny, you ought to go into Spain and warn the government people of their danger. You could get to them."

"No doubt; but the story would come right back home, and I'd be black-listed and lose all my sources of information. I am telling you and letting you pass it on."

"But when I don't give the source of my information, the comrades think it is just the gossip of the Riviera idlers. Everybody knows how refugees delude themselves; they believe anything that holds out a hope."

"You can tell your friends that there are relatives of Juan March on the Cap—you've heard of the 'tobacco king' from Majorca? I'm told that he has put up several million pesetas for the rebellion. They say that General Francisco Franco is the Caudillo he has picked."

"But I read that our government has shipped Franco away to the Canary Islands!"

"Maybe so; but how many hours would it take him to fly from

there to Morocco ? Ask yourself what Franco would do if *he* should learn that some of his officers were plotting to overthrow him and kick him out of the army."

"That's where we intellectuals are at such a disadvantage," remarked the school director greatly depressed. "Our opponents can commit murder any time they feel like it ; but if we did it, what would become of our ideas ?"

"Ah, yes !" replied the art expert, no more cheerfully. "We cannot commit murder, so we suffer it !"



Raoul repeated his urging that Lanny should visit Spain ; but Lanny said that at present he had important negotiations in hand regarding pictures. The school director pointed out that the spring was lovely, an agreeable season, but the summer was hot. Lanny said he didn't mind heat, he had been raised on it. He had written to several clients asking if they would be interested in Spanish paintings ; so later on he might be able to combine business with sociological pleasure.

The school director incorporated Lanny's warnings into an article which was published in one of the Leftist papers in Barcelona, also in Socialist papers in France. The same information was used by Rick in a London weekly, and the article appeared also in New York. So Lanny could feel that he was really serving the democratic peoples, and could play his part in smart society with fewer twinges of conscience. His mother saw to it that he met important persons, and he learned to guide the conversation with finesse. He collected the names of those who were doing the work of the Fascists and the Nazis on the Riviera, and got an idea of the amount of money they were spending to influence the French elections. Much as the two dictators disliked each other, they were drawing together against their common enemies. Ribbentrop, the champagne salesman who had become Hitler's travelling diplomat, had met with Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Ciano, and agreed to drop all press attacks by one nation upon the other.

By the time the French elections were due, Lanny was so loaded with information that he hopped into his car and drove to Paris for a talk with Léon Blum. In the peaceful old days the meeting would have been in some café, but now Lanny went secretly to the Socialist leader's home on the Île St.-Louis and asked him to say nothing about it. Blum was at the climax of a gruelling campaign

and showed its effects; always thin and rather frail, he was now close to exhaustion. This is one of the tragic consequences of the democratic system, that in order to get a chance to do anything a man has to go through an ordeal which all but deprives him of the power to do it. The reactionary leaders, having the backing of great wealth and ninety per cent. of the press, can take things easily, while the people's champion has to drag himself from one meeting to the next, shout himself hoarse, and sit up most of the night attending committee meetings.

If Léon Blum could have had his own way he would have been a poet and art collector. In this old house full of bibelots he looked with pathetic envy upon a younger man who, in spite of Socialist convictions, managed somehow to keep time for all the Muses. Bold and defiant on the platform, Blum was shy and rather deprecating in his private life. It seemed to him that his party was taking an unnecessary burden upon its shoulders by putting a Jew at its head; but the party thought otherwise, so he was making the fight. He had almost paid for it with his life, for the Fascist rowdies had mobbed him in his car, hurling glass at him and cutting him to the jugular vein.

Lanny found him distressed about the international situation, but obliged to give most of his time and thought to domestic problems. He was pledging himself to put down the Fascist leagues and to break the power of the great Banque de France, the real ruler of the Republic. He was going to nationalize the munitions industry, he declared. Lanny replied: "That is fine, but are you sure it will get you more munitions in a shorter time?"

The pacifist statesman was rather shocked to discover how much of a militarist his American friend had become. Lanny had to assure him that this wasn't because his father had gone in for the manufacture of fighter planes; it was because he had learned so much about what aeroplanes could do and what use the dictators were planning to make of them. Lanny wasn't violating any confidence in mentioning that General Göring had purchased some of the new Budd-Erlings; he could be sure the French Army intelligence service knew this, even though they had not troubled to mention it to the leader of the Front Populaire and probable next Premier of their country. Perhaps it was a secret that United States oil companies were taking Hitler's money and constructing huge refineries of aviation petrol in Hamburg; also that American manufacturers of magnesium were selling it to Hitler to be used for making bombs. But these were Hitler's secrets, not Lanny Budd's!

VI

Trudi Schultz had taken Lanny's advice and got herself a studio over on the Left Bank, near a famous art school. The place was one of the tiniest, for she was doing only drawing and needed no apparatus but a board and some paper. Already she had made acquaintances and become a part of the student life of Paris, taken for granted and left undisturbed. She was making sketches of the workers of the neighbourhood and delighting them greatly; the works had been hung in a near-by café, and several had been sold for fifty francs each, about two dollars American—but it wasn't American. Trudi was pleased, because if she earned her rent and food, all of Lanny's money could go for the cause.

It was in order that a gentleman friend should call upon her—indeed, there would have been something eccentric about her if this hadn't happened. She made cocoa, and spread a supper of bread and cheese and olives, with well-washed endive. Meanwhile Lanny told about Spain and the calamities which were threatened there; this time he had an audience easy to convince. He told about Blum and his fears that this kindly idealist was taking on a task which called for tougher fibre. Trudi told about her neighbours and what part they took in the political struggle. Many of the students wore the *béret basque*, which had come to be the symbol of the Fascists in France; others wore the red cap, and there were fights between them and broken heads to be mended.

Lanny's mother had fixed his mind on the question whether he was in love with Trudi. It was cozy in this studio, with dormer windows open and the soft breeze of a spring evening drifting in; a young man of romantic disposition thought it might be charming to call your attic room a studio, to cultivate your talents and prepare your own meals of peasant food. Trudi's place differed from those of French art students whom Lanny had known in that everything about it was orderly and clean. The same thing applied to her person. Watching those delicately chiselled features, candid blue eyes, and fair hair, wavy, with glints in it, Lanny thought he would like to get some painter to do her portrait as that Aryan whom the Nazi propagandists were desecrating.

Trudi was a stranger in a strange land. She watched the people about her, and would talk about them for a while, but in the end the conversation would return to her homeland. Her mind was obsessed by concentration camps and torture dungeons, and the

horrors which had befallen not merely German workers and intellectuals, but German civilization, German ideals, German decency. When she talked about it her sensitive lips would begin to tremble and tears would be close to her eyes. What she wanted to talk about was not art, even her own, but the question of what she was going to put into her next indictment of the Nazi fiends. Lanny saw that if he ever made love to Gertrud Schultz, alias Mueller, alias Kornmahler, he would have to learn to eat his bread with tears and make the acquaintance of those heavenly powers of which Goethe had sung.

He had just come from Zoltan's Paris apartment, full of art treasures of one sort or another; autographed drawings and photographs on the walls, beautifully bound works of literature and art upon the shelves. There was a piano, and Lanny had spent the afternoon playing Mozart's violin sonatas with his friend. They found delight in rendering those melodies of infinite variety and delicacy. If it was an andante, their souls would be flooded with melancholy—but the lovely and charming kind, having to do with old unhappy far-off things, and not with the crude and cruel realities of the morning newspaper. If it was an allegro, it was the gay dancing of spring breezes over flowery fields, with young lambs and rabbits and other light-footed creatures taking part; the musicians would be flushed with pleasure both physical and imaginative, a sense of triumph in their own skill and of oneness with all created and rejoicing life. *Seid umschlungen, Millionen!*

But if Lanny made love to Trudi he would have to bid good-bye to such innocent delights. He would have to learn to weep for the world's wrong, and to look upon idleness and pleasure-seeking as treason to his martyred comrades. Even to have him coming here and talking about Mozart must present itself as a temptation to Trudi. She could hardly have failed to contemplate the possibility of loving this agreeable American, or at any rate having him make love to her. And would she feel about him as he felt about Rosemary?

VII

He went to call upon his uncle Jesse, going early in the morning so as to catch the old warrior before he set forth to his electioneering duties. To his surprise he found the incumbent deputy also recumbent, having been knocked out by the 'flu; a most inopportune attack, holding him helpless while enemies raided his political preserves. Jesse's faithful wife sat by his bedside while he whispered his orders for the day; after that he was glad of his nephew's

company, to take his mind off what the damned Fascists and the near-damned Socialists would be saying and doing.

The Front Populaire worked in a peculiar way under the French practice. There was an election in which the parties all ran their individual candidates, and then a week later there was a run-off in which the two highest candidates fought it out. This meant that until the twenty-sixth of April the Communists and the Socialists were bitter rivals; then until the third of May they would be friends, uniting against a common foe; after that date—"Well, we'll see how it works out," said the Red deputy. Having faithfully served the proletariat of a Paris *faubourg* through four years of general betrayal, Zhess Block-léss was appealing for a vindication, and it was indeed a cruel thought that a canary-coloured Socialist might take advantage of his stricken condition to steal his votes and his post of service.

The patient having been forbidden to talk, Lanny had everything his own way for once. He told the news from Bienvenu and Connecticut, from England and Italy and Spain. He found that his uncle knew all about the last-named; the Communists, too, had their channels of information. What they had learned all fitted in perfectly to the Communist formulas; it might have been part of the old gramophone record to which Lanny had been listening from boyhood. Ansaldo and Fiat had put up the money for Mussolini, with some help from the House of Morgan; Thyssen and other steel kings had financed Hitler; and now an ex-smuggler who owned the government tobacco monopoly was going to defeat the will of the Spanish people and restore reaction to the Iberian throne!

To the painter turned politician this was proof positive of the futility of politics, except as he conducted it, for purposes of agitation and propaganda; the privileged classes would never give up without a fight, and to expect it was to be futile like Jesse's nephew or else a deliberate betrayer of the workers like that Socialist who was trying to displace Jesse. The sick man forgot his doctor's orders and began telling some of the things he had learned during four years' service in the Chamber; how the two hundred families controlled the legislation of the country by means of an organization called the "Union of Economic Interests," but which should have been called the "Master-Briber of France." All business-men were mulcted for funds, and when the organization set out to defeat some particular measure, any deputy could pay his gambling debts and buy a diamond bracelet for his *amie*.

Lanny said: "I know about it from Denis de Bruyne, so don't get excited and make your illness worse." He watched this suffering

old man, wrinkled, bald, and pathetic, and thought: "Yes, a man can give up his pleasures; a man can throw himself into a battle. What makes him do it?"

Obviously, intensity of conviction. Jesse Blackless knew that he was right, he had the answer to all the questions, and if the world followed his guidance it might be saved. A man with that certainty made his mind into a sharp sword to pierce the minds of others; he couldn't do this if he let the sword be blunted by qualifications or hesitations. That was how Adi Schicklgruber had made headway with the bewildered and unhappy German people; he had got a few simple ideas fixed in his mind and had told them a million times without wearying or resting. When two such men got opposing ideas, then you had a war, like that between the Communists and the Nazi-Fascists now. Perhaps it was futile to imagine that men would ever stop fighting and settle their arguments by the method of open discussion and the counting of noses; but it seemed to Lanny that somebody ought to recommend the procedure and keep it before the public mind with the same determination the fanatics displayed.

VIII

On a rainy Sunday some ten million Frenchmen—no women—went to the polls and had their noses counted. The Red workers of Uncle Jesse's district stood by him loyally, and he came out at the top. But he didn't get an actual majority, so there had to be another poll. This time not all the *médecins* of Paris could keep the old war-horse off the platform; he had to be assisted, and was able to speak for only a few minutes, but that was enough to set the crowd wild. He pledged his undying war upon capitalist reaction in all its forms, and his loyalty to the Front Populaire so long as it stood by that programme; on the following Sunday, again rainy, the voters turned out and re-elected him. They elected seventy-two Communist deputies instead of ten. It was almost unbelievable!

The people's coalition had more than sixty per cent. of the deputies, which meant that Blum was certain to become Premier. Having contributed several thousand francs to Blum's campaign fund, Lanny felt that he had a share in the victory and could go back to Bienvenu with a good conscience. He did so, and was pleased to find that his idle friends on the Riviera were staggered and in grave fear as to their incomes and security. That included the Spaniards, for how could they hope to put through a *coup d'état* while a Jewish

Socialist had control of French foreign policy and for all practical purposes commanded the French Army and Navy ?

Beauty had accepted the invitation to spend the summer at Shore Acres, and was going for the month of June with Margy to lend her assistance to another London season. Beauty was a sensible woman, for all her foolishness ; she knew that in her middle fifties she could no longer expect to be invited on her looks, and so she took the trouble to make herself useful to her friends ; advising about invitation lists, attending to difficult commissions, making herself agreeable to all. Now she yearned to use her social skills to repair the damaged fortunes of her son, and she begged him to come to London with her. Lanny knew exactly what that meant, for already she had been introducing him to young females whose parents had money.

Beauty Budd didn't go by all the precepts of the ancient Jewish Scriptures, but there was one which had her fervent endorsement—the statement that it is not good that man should live alone. She was certain that some designing female was going to snap Lanny up, even before Irma might have severed the legal bond ; and if it had to be somebody, let it be somebody whom Beauty had inspected. Doing her best to conform to her son's strange fancies, she sought out a "blue-stocking," one of those unfortunates who wear glasses and at whom, according to the non-biblical legend, men seldom make passes. This person was the daughter of a retired banker, and had a couple of published novels to her credit ; Beauty took the trouble to meet her and invite her to lunch and then leave her alone with Lanny. Afterwards the mother was distressed to learn that the novels were of the so-called stream of consciousness school, which Lanny considered the acme of futility and a symptom of the declining vitality of the parasitic classes. After making several vain efforts to find a line of conversation, Lanny had invited the lady to play croquet !

IX

But there was somebody in London with whom he would know how to talk. That was Rosemary, Countess of Sandhaven, and when he thought about her he felt little tingles running up and down his nervous system. He had been living without love for the better part of a year, and now he was beginning to look at women again and to think about them. Modern love is a complicated invention, and few knew it better than the blundering grandson of Budd's. He had come to the age where he was beginning to reckon up the cost. Not

in money, for that wasn't much of an item; the Riviera was well supplied with ladies, obtainable at any price from ten francs up to ten thousand; with many of the most high-toned, those whom you met in smart society, no price was specified, but you left a proper sum on the mantelpiece before taking your departure. To know what the proper sum should be was like knowing which bank-note to hand to the butler after you had spent a week in a friend's house.

What troubled Lanny was the emotional entanglements, the intellectual and social obligations you got let in for. You would no longer be permitted to stay at home and read or play the piano; you had to take the lady to casinos and cabarets. If she was given to sports, you had to play tennis with her—whereas Jerry Pendleton played a much faster and more enjoyable game. If you tried to sneak off for a drive with Raoul Palma, she would be certain that it was some other woman and she might pay you back with some other man. If you visited Paris or London or Berlin she would want to go along—and then you might as well have the banns published in the newspapers!

But with Rosemary everything would be simple. Rosemary was passionate, yet at the same time she was serene; she took things easily, including love, and maybe that was the way to take it if you wanted to keep out of trouble. Rosemary's social position was such that nobody could hurt her feelings; she was good company—by which Lanny meant that she would keep quiet and let him talk, and not force her ideas upon him. Really an agreeable mistress; he had made sure of it when he was sixteen, and again a decade later, and here the wheel of fortune had come round again! He would send her a wire: "Shall I come for a visit?" She would answer: "Delighted." She would come to London and get some sort of place. Lanny would never forget the first time, when the bombs had been falling on the city; he still had in a drawer the fragment of shrapnel he had carried off as a souvenir of that *belle nuit d'amour*.

But there were complications, even so. Bertie might make a fuss—Rosemary had never been quite sure that her restless husband would behave himself according to modern standards of gentility. Then, too, Lanny had to think about little Frances and his claims upon her; he mustn't put himself at a disadvantage in any dispute which might arise with Irma over the custody of the child. Finally, there was the other half of him which wanted to sacrifice itself for a cause and would look upon him with disdain if he involved himself in another fashionable intrigue. He very much wanted the approval of that half, and had no answer to its claim that he ought to find some woman who would co-operate with him in the fight against Fascism.

Right away he would start thinking about Trudi. What was she doing, and what would it be like to live with her, and would it lie in his power to make her happy ?

X

When the time came for Beauty to depart she hated to leave her son at Bienvenu alone, and was not to be persuaded that swimming and sailing and fishing with an ex-tutor constituted company enough. She invited him to motor her to London, and he knew what that meant, of course ; she would take him to Bluegrass, Margy's country place, and it wouldn't be more than a couple of days before charming young ladies would be happening to drop in at meal-times.

But it was hard for Lanny to resist an invitation to drive, and so they drove, and spent a couple of nights and a day with Emily at Les Forêts. It happened to be the day, early in June, when Léon Blum became Premier of the French Republic, a red-letter day in Lanny's calendar. He could talk frankly with Emily about it, and he told her, among other things, that he had just had a letter from Kurt Meissner, who was expecting to arrive in Paris in a couple of weeks. Lanny conceived it his duty to warn Emily, in the strictest confidence, of his suspicions concerning Kurt's purposes. If the *salonnière* didn't mind entertaining a Nazi agent, that was her privilege, but Lanny didn't want her to do it under the impression that she was promoting international understanding or the art of music.

Lanny told about Forrest Quadratt, who was playing the same role in the States. The Germans were spreading their nets all over the world, and whether it was the refined and subtle artist, the humblest kitchen slavey, or the horny-handed stevedore of the docks, they all had their work laid out and performed it with fanatical devotion. Beauty had a letter from her daughter, who had settled down cheerfully for an indefinite stay at Shore Acres. Vittorio had become fast friends with Quadratt, and Lanny remarked : " That is, no doubt, according to orders ; a consequence of the meeting of Ribbentrop and Ciano." To Beauty Budd this was a sign of her son's pathological state of mind. The tactful Emily didn't say what she thought, but promised to respect her friend's confidence.

Lanny delivered his mother to Bluegrass, but dodged the charming young ladies. He had a deal for a couple of pictures in London, and some money to collect ; then he proceeded to The Reaches and spent several days with Rick, punting on the Thames,

and agreeing with his friend as to the very bad state of Europe. He told the news he had picked up from different sorts of people, and it was a service to a handicapped man who could sit at a typewriter and hammer out an article and have it reach thousands and perhaps hundreds of thousands of readers. That is the way democracy has been made, and the way it can be protected ; they both agreed upon the supreme importance of publicity.

XI

Lanny told this best of friends about the state of his heart. Irma was out of his thoughts ; her place had been taken by Rosemary. There wasn't a day or night that he didn't think of her, and there was a constant pull upon him to call her up or to drop in and see her. He was sure they would take up their old relationship with hardly any preliminaries.

Rick said : " But there's nothing to that, Lanny. You've tried it, and it never got you anywhere."

" We had a lot of fun," he replied, putting it crudely.

" I know, but you can't go on playing round for ever. You know she would never give up Bertie unless she had to. She likes her great manor and her title and everything it brings her. You can't hope to be anything but a hanger-on."

" It's my hard luck that I keep picking out the wrong girls."

" You go with the wrong set. Join some of the Socialist groups and you'll meet a better sort."

" I can't, Rick, because I'd get myself spotted and lose all my connections."

Among the callers that day at The Reaches had been a young professor of the University of London ; and now Rick commented : " That's the sort of place where you'd meet women who are interested in our ideas. Give a couple of lectures there and you'd have a swarm of them around you."

Lanny couldn't keep from laughing. " Me' lecture at a university ? When I haven't any education at all ? "

" They often bring specialists on unusual subjects. You could talk instructively on the founding of great art collections in America. Tell them your experiences, and you'd have a dozen budding art experts ready to follow you."

Lanny didn't find that so alluring ; he didn't want a dozen, only one, and that one should have a gentle Mona Lisa smile, heavy smooth ropes of straw-coloured hair, and the aspect of Minerva,

goddess of wisdom. Rosemary had made those things desirable to him in his boyhood, and the spell had never been broken.

"But you can't do it!" exclaimed Rick. "Really, old top, it would be disgraceful. It would only drag you out of the movement again. It wouldn't add anything to your life, and it might get you into the devil of a mess."

That settled it. Lanny couldn't do anything that Rick said was disgraceful. Both in matters of Socialist ethics and of English good form Rick had always been the authority. Now the younger man replied: "I suppose I'd better get out of England for a while. Raoul has been begging me to go to Spain, and maybe that's my next job."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed the baronet's son. Then he added: "But don't come out with some Andalusian señorita!"

XII

Lanny drove back to Margy's to say good-bye to his mother. Out of politeness he had to stay a couple of days and meet at least one charming young lady. Being in a highly susceptible mood, he fell promptly under her spell; but when he began to talk with her about world affairs he decided he would as soon keep a canary.

He was glad when there came a letter from a client in the Middle West, asking if he knew of a representative Greuze to add to a French collection. Having a set of his card-files always in his car, Lanny looked up a portrait of a woman which he had inspected in Geneva more than a decade ago while taking in one of the League meetings. "Lovely and sentimental," were the words he had written, and the price was sixteen thousand dollars. Now he wired Geneva to know if the picture was still available and the answer came: "Yes." He cabled his client, offering to inspect the work again and report in detail. To this he got another "Yes," so he had a graceful way of escape from having Margy and Beauty trot out more fillies before him. Margy from Kentucky raised blooded horses in order to keep herself from being home-sick, and thus Lanny was led to identify the marriage market and the horse-fair.

A jolly way to earn your money, by motoring into the high Alps in the month of June! Lanny crossed the Rhine at Strasbourg, city of dreadful memories for him, for at this bridge the Nazis had turned over to him the broken body of Freddi Robin. Now they didn't invite him to inspect the fortifications they were rushing to completion; but he arrived at night and saw the arc-lights of the

constructions all up and down the river and heard the grinding and roaring of great machines. Only a little more than three months had passed since Hitler had moved in his troops, but he would do in that time as much as the French had done on their side in as many years. That was German efficiency, and what a tragedy that it couldn't be put to less hateful ends !

The snow-capped peaks were rose-pink in the dawn and after sunset, and in the twilight they turned to purple. The great lake was garnet-blue, the swans and excursion boats gleaming white, and the plane trees and chestnuts a lively green ; Lanny thought, not for the first time, that every prospect pleased him and only man was vile. The magnificent new palace of the League of Nations was almost completed, and rarely had history contrived a more cutting bit of irony. It was as if a monarch had built himself a stately pleasure dome, and as soon as it was done he was carried into it in his coffin and walled up.

The legions of Il Duce had marched into Addis Ababa, and there was nothing for the League to do but bow its head in defeat. As Lanny arrived in the old city of Calvin, the world's statesmen were gathering for a special meeting of the Assembly, in which they would condone the crime by withdrawing their decree of sanctions. Lanny Budd, who had been present at the birth of the League, might now have witnessed its obsequies, but the very thought of it made him sick. He could imagine the bland hypocrisy of the British Tories, and the feeble plea of poor Blum for disarmament and collective security ; crying peace, while down in the valleys the Nazi labour battalions were toiling day and night to get ready for war. In the soul of an amateur publicist there remained no smallest trace of that naïve enthusiasm which had taken him to a dozen international gatherings and caused him to run here and there with the crowds, gazing at top-hatted and morning-coated statesmen and listening to their promises of disarmament and collective security.

XIII

Lanny was here to buy a picture. He inspected it, and cabled his client a description and his opinion that it was well worth the price. Two days later the money was in the bank for him, and he paid it and got his receipt in duplicate, and had the work carried to his car, then packed, insured, and shipped. That was all ; now he would drive down the valley of the Rhône, and through Bourg to Paris—the route over which he had taken Marie de Bruyne before he had

quite come of age. Lanny's memories of roads in Europe were bound up with loves and the pursuit of pleasure, with money-making, political strife, and diplomatic bargaining, war and the flight from it, agony, fear, and hatred—in short, the soul of Lanny Budd was the soul of that old continent.

Most of the way he thought about Trudi, and made up his mind that he would talk to her about love. She was a sensible woman, and enlightened; she would know what was in his heart, and they could talk frankly about what it would mean to them both. He arrived in the evening and went straight to see her.

Summer had come, and it was a warm evening; all Paris that was too poor to get into the country was sitting on its doorsteps or wandering about in search of a cooler spot. Lanny wired, and Trudi was waiting in her studio. He offered to take her for a drive—no, he wasn't exhausted, he was used to long-distance touring. He took her into the Bois and treated her to a privately manufactured breeze; he told her about Mont Blanc in the sunset, and about the swans on Lac Léman, and about the staid old Protestant city of watch-makers and money-lenders. They had made money out of the League as a tourist attraction, but had put little trust in it so far as concerned themselves. Every man in that mountain land was a sharpshooter; their liberties for more than four hundred years had depended upon their aim, and they were not afraid to trust their citizenry with guns. Now they were carrying out an elaborate plan for the storage of wheat and other food in enormous caissons which were sunk to the bottom of their lakes, where the food would be preserved at near-freezing temperatures against the day when Nazis or Fascists might seek passage through the mountain passes. The Swiss would make it as hard as possible.

Trudi told what she was doing, so far as discretion permitted; Lanny told about England, and what Rick thought of the world situation. He gave her what money he could spare; then, on a sudden impulse, he decided that she might like to hear about Rosemary—not by name, but as the sort of story that every woman in the world is interested in. He didn't say that he was cruelly tempted, but only that his old life was beckoning to him and that he wanted to keep out of it. He told about his mother and Margy, and their scheming, including the "stream of consciousness" lady; altogether Trudi could get the impression that he was a young gentleman with a wide range of choice in the field of romance, and she wouldn't fail to realize that he had a purpose in talking about such matters to her.

She handled the problem with tact which would have done credit

even to Beauty Budd. She began telling him about her life with Ludi ; how they had met at the art school, and had gone on excursions in the summer and swimming in the lakes. Her parents had been opposed to the match, because Ludi had been a working boy, and had had to make his own way as student and commercial artist, whereas Trudi's parents had been of the official class. He was kind and intelligent, but very dependent upon her, and she was haunted by his tragic fate. She just couldn't bring herself to believe that he was dead, but saw him coming back to her, in a condition like Freddi Robin, and she having to care for him.

Lanny saw that she was sparing him embarrassment. She couldn't very well offer to help him find a wife, as the older ladies were inspired to do ; probably she didn't know any of the right sort here in a strange land. But she said that Rick was right, he ought to meet women of his own way of thinking and not yield to the spell which the parasitic classes evidently still held for him. " Those women are very beautiful, Lanny ; but keeping that way takes an awful lot of time and bother, and doesn't leave them much for developing their minds." Trudi was decidedly stern in what she said, although kind and motherly.

Lanny agreed ; she was right, and that was why he was on his way to Bienvvenu instead of to London. Perhaps he would find some mail awaiting him, opening up a market for Spanish pictures ; if so, he would take a trip with Raoul Palma and make some more money for the cause. He didn't repeat Rick's smart witticism about the Andalusian señorita !

19

Where Men Decay

I

ON THE heights above Nice, a district known as Californie, a Spanish lady had rented a rather sumptuous villa ; Señora Villareal was her name, a widow belonging to two old landowning families. When Lanny arrived in Bienvvenu the fact was mentioned in the local paper, and a couple of days later he received a note from this lady, reminding him that he had been introduced to her at the home of the Baroness de la Tourette. Now the Señora asked Monsieur Budd if he would come to tea, as she wished to talk to him about a matter of interest.

The stately dark lady from the south of Spain looked, like so many, as if she might have Moorish blood. She had two lovely

daughters of marriageable age, with velvety complexions and drooping eyelashes ; they supped the tea, and blushed whenever Lanny dropped a word to them. It was not the fashion for virgins of aristocratic Spain to be thrust forward or caused to meet young or middle-aged male persons unnecessarily. They stayed out of sight behind their *rejas* or iron grilles. Now, watching the manifest palpitations of this pair, Lanny wondered if the existence of Reno, Nevada, could have become known to the Sevillanas and if conceivably a Spanish lady had become so far Americanized that she was willing to submit her daughters for the consideration of a man who had not yet been legally parted from his wife !

But no ; Spain remained the fortress of propriety and maidenly virtue. The two blushing young ladies retired, and the mother proceeded to reveal that this was a business, not a matrimonial meeting. She referred to the disturbances which were plaguing her native land ; the peasants embarking upon a sort of blind and dumb rent strike, helping themselves to the crops, and the Guardia Civil being only with difficulty persuaded to shoot them. Lanny informed his hostess that he had heard this evil news, and could understand the financial embarrassment it must be causing her. " With two such lovely daughters it would be difficult for you to reduce your scale of living." The Señora appreciated this straightforward line of conversation, and without further delay explained that she had in the mansion on one of her estates some very fine paintings, and having heard that Lanny was an expert in this field, she had thought he might be willing to inspect them and perhaps lend her some money upon them.

This was no new experience for the husband of an heiress and grandson of Budd's. He explained courteously that he had little money of his own ; what he earned he spent quickly, being of that improvident disposition. Nor did he know anyone who would lend money on pictures ; it was a difficult matter, for they would have to be put into the possession of the lender, or at any rate in escrow, and packing, shipping, storing, and insuring would make it expensive. Better for the Señora to select one or two of the works which she valued least and put a price upon them and let Lanny try to dispose of them. This service would cost her nothing.

The Señora replied that the pictures were heirlooms, part of the heritage of her daughters ; she would find it difficult indeed to part with them. This was old stuff, of course ; all the *grandes dames* said it, and were so skilled in the social arts that it took a while to make sure how much of it they meant. There was nothing to do but begin a patient siege—requiring as much of Lanny's time and diplomatic

skill as if he had been trying to make love to the lady. He must be the soul of courtesy and kindness, but at the same time as haughty as any grandee's widow ; he must make plain that his profession was one of great dignity and that he had his rigid principles. Also he must convey the fact that American millionaires were no one's "suckers," but on the contrary shrewd and hard-headed business-men who insisted upon knowing what they were buying, and would come back with further patronage only in case they were satisfied that what was shipped to them was in all respects as it had been represented.

Señora Villareal described her treasures : a head by Antonio Moro which she insisted was genuine ; a very lively Lucas, a harvest scene by Sorolla, and three Zuloagas about whose charms she became eloquent. In addition there were several French works, including, to Lanny's surprise, a Detaze which she had purchased from a dealer in Cannes some twenty-five years ago. Lanny assured the lady that these were all standard works and could be disposed of at fair prices. He mentioned that the new Spanish government had passed a regulation similar to that of Italy forbidding the export of the national art treasures. He did not know how strictly this was enforced, but the Señora said that it would not be necessary to take it too seriously, because those having the authority in Seville were among her friends.

At her urgent request he made an estimate of what each of the works might bring. She told him that his figures were much less than she had been told the paintings were worth, and he replied that those who made such remarks were not as a rule charged with the task of finding purchasers for art works. "The point you must bear in mind is that there has been a world financial crisis, and I doubt if old masters will ever again bring what they did before 1929—at least not in your lifetime or mine."

So he talked, smoothly and persuasively, as Zoltan had taught him to do ; and in the end he discovered that the Señora was not nearly so deeply attached to her heirlooms as she had wished him to believe. She was willing for him to take the trip to her estate on the basis of a promise that she would put a fair price upon at least two of her paintings, and she wrote him a note to her steward instructing him to permit Señor Budd to examine the collection as carefully as he might desire.

II

So now Lanny could no longer put off going into Spain. He drove at once to the school and told Raoul, who was delighted, and ready to start forthwith. Not long ago the school director had

married one of his graduates, a competent Arlésienne who would look after things in his absence. Lanny said they would start in the morning, and he went home to write letters and cablegrams and pack his bags. It was an old and familiar kind of fun ; any time when you were bored, or discouraged, or suspected that your liver wasn't working properly, you tossed your things into several bags, saw your car provided with petrol and oil and water and air, and set out for some new part of old Europe.

The Spanish intellectual made an excellent travelling-companion. He was unspoiled, and grateful for the smallest favour. He was an ardent believer in Lanny's cause, and incidentally thought that Lanny himself was the most wonderful of persons—which certainly didn't detract from the pleasure of having him along. Their passports had been duly viséd, and they had plenty of money in Lanny's purse ; they were going to take it easy, stop when they felt like it, look at palaces and cathedrals, and above all get acquainted with the people of Spain.

This land of ancient tyrannies had now become a safe place for Raoul Palma ; the refugees of the Left had come swarming home, passing the refugees of the Right on their way out. Lanny explained that this would have to be a non-political tour, for he had letters to owners of private collections and must give no offence. "However," he added, "we can use our eyes and ears."

First to Barcelona, then on to Valencia and Seville, and from there up to Madrid : such was the itinerary. Lanny promised that they would detour to the tiny village where Raoul had been raised, the son of a wretchedly paid school-teacher who had been shot "while attempting to escape," after having been arrested for protesting against the Moroccan war. Raoul had an older brother who had been to the Argentine as a sailor and recently had returned to his home. Raoul told about his boyhood and the galling poverty in which his family had existed ; he was a slender and somewhat undersized man, and the delicacy of features which Lanny so admired might have been due to the fact that in childhood he had always been hungry. The intensity of feeling which made his nostrils quiver as he talked was due to beatings of the peasants which he had seen inflicted by the Guardia Civil, an austere and cruel armed force which had faithfully served the landowning masters ; *la Benemérita*, the masters called it.

But all that was now changed ; at least Raoul hoped it was. He wanted it changed without delay, and found it difficult to agree with Lanny's notion that politicians had to have time to get themselves settled in the saddle before they started to ride. Men who

were well paid for their time could afford to take things easy, but landless tillers of the soil who had no bread to put into their children's mouths had been promised immediate help, and if they didn't get it would resort to direct action. Lanny smilingly remarked : "According to Marxist principles, I, too, am for direct action. It brings old masters into the market !"

III

When you had entered Spain, you knew it right away, because the roads were poorer and likewise the people who walked by the side of them. Two amateur sociologists fell at once to discussing the reasons. Raoul, the rationalist, said it was the Catholic Church, which kept the masses blindfolded and in the chains of superstition. Raoul, the Marxist, added that the Church was one of the great landlords and great bankers of Spain. Under the monarchy the Jesuits had owned the Agrarian State Bank with its many branches, and when a peasant asked a loan to finance his crop, the question asked was not if he was honest and hard-working, but if he was a Republican or a Socialist. Four years ago the Jesuits had been legally disbanded ; whereupon they had turned their properties over to dummy owners who maintained the same old system.

Lanny, who thought that Marx was a gospel but not the only one, pointed out that it was the fashion of civilized mankind to denude the hills and river-banks of the trees which nature had appointed to grow there ; thus the top soil was washed away, and there being nothing to hold the water, floods came in the spring and droughts in the summer. The older the civilization grew, the more you saw this : in China, the Near East, and the ancient empires which had crowded about the Mediterranean Sea. The same process was going on in the United States, and the end would be barren hills and deserts, with a straggling population scratching a living among the rocks and being killed off by famines.

The complete Marxist said : "Perhaps ; but is that any reason for permitting one duke to own two hundred thousand acres of land, no matter how poor ?"

Lanny said : "It might be an advantage, if he would apply the techniques of modern science to restoring the land and getting the maximum production out of it."

"But he doesn't !" exclaimed the other. "He puts it in charge of overseers, who rent it out and have no thought but to squeeze every peseta out of the peasants and kick them off if they fall behind.

The duke comes to Cannes to play baccarat and polo and shoot pigeons."

"I think I have the honour of his acquaintance," smiled the American. "I am entirely in favour of the new agrarian laws." These laws limited the amount of land which any individual could hold, giving the remainder to the peasants, compensating the owners, and letting the peasants pay the state out of their crops.

"The landlords are all scurrying to cheat that law," said Raoul. "They are deeding portions of their land to their sons and daughters and other relatives whom they can trust, and thus making it appear that they do not own so much."

Lanny was amused, perceiving that his friend had forgotten from what source he had derived this information. Lanny didn't remind him, but said: "There should be a tax of the full rental value of all land; that would put an end to speculation and make land available to those who are willing to apply their labour to it."

IV

They drove into Barcelona, which Raoul said was the least Spanish of all cities in Spain; it was a great port, and might as well have been Marseilles. Lanny observed, as many times previously, how modern invention and commerce were putting their stamp upon all the accessible parts of the earth. Here were the same ships, the same tramcars and motor-cars, the same fashions for all who could afford them, the same internationally advertised products.

They parked their car and strolled down the Ramblas, the wide tree-lined boulevard that runs through the old city; made lively by flower-sellers and cages full of singing birds. Visitors with money in their purses might have bought products from any of the other great ports of the earth. They might have gone in and seen a film about an American heiress who ran away from her father's home and married a handsome young garage mechanic, or one about an American newspaper reporter who jovially set the police authorities aside and ran down a band of gangsters all by himself. From those films the Barcelonés could learn about hundreds of different gadgets, everything from steam-rollers to cigar-lighters, and if they searched they might find most of these gadgets on sale in their town. From a kiosk on the corner they might purchase a newspaper and learn about events which had happened a few hours previously in New York or Singapore. If they desired to communicate with these places, and had the price, it could be arranged in a

few minutes. If they wished to get there quickly, a system of planes would take them to Singapore, and the system to New York was even then in process of being completed.

But Lanny didn't want these things; what he wanted was to see Spain, so they wandered off the boulevards and down towards the docks, the district called Barceloneta, where they found a waterside café frequented by the workers. Bare wooden tables and sawdust on the floor, tobacco smoke in the air, and cuttlefish fried in olive oil on the menu—this, too, might have been Marseilles or Genoa or Naples, ports in which Lanny had supped with curiosity and pleasure.

Two men dressed as they were would not fail to attract attention. *Extranjeros*, naturally; *de dónde vienen?* A sturdy, unshaven labourer across the table asked the question politely, and when he heard the magic word *americano*, he revealed that it was a great moment. He had been to the cinema, oh, many, many times, and knew all about that land of wonders; also he had a cousin in San Francisco, and did perhaps the Señor know him? It wasn't so easy to communicate, because he was a Catalan and knew only a little Spanish; but it wasn't long before a Murcian dockworker with a heavy black moustache and a red shirt moved over from the next table to help out. Word spread, "*Él es americano*," and everybody in the place wanted to listen; when they had finished eating their rice with sausages, or codfish with tomatoes, instead of going out in the normal way, they stood around the table. Lanny ordered an extra bottle of red wine, and then another, and soon had them talking freely.

No one had the slightest hesitation in telling about political affairs in Catalonia. The revolution was under way, and it had begun with the right to say what you pleased and to pound upon the table while saying it. In every group of these workers and fishermen was someone who had recently been released from jail and was making the most of his opportunity. The majority of them were anarchists, in a crude, elementary way. They all belonged to unions which were dominated by syndicalist thought; the government was to be shoved aside and the trade unions were to take control of industry and run it. With them it wasn't a matter of theory but of direct observation of politicians and what they did when they were elected—or rather what they didn't. *Al diablo* with them all! Here they had been in office for four months, and what had they done but talk? At this rate, how many lifetimes would it take to put down the *patrones* and put up the *trabajadores*?

No greater delusion in the world than that the workers could

change their condition by dropping a piece of paper into a ballot box ! " Not that we won't do it," said the Catalan who had started the conversation and who stuck to his chair within reach of the wine bottle. " I myself was paid fifty pesetas for doing my duty as a citizen ; an agent of the C.E.D.A. paid me the money to vote their way, and I took the money and voted republican." There was laughter and applause, and Lanny gathered that others had discovered this method of expropriating the expropriators. Since his researches had unearthed the same practice in the land of the Pilgrims' pride, he could not be too greatly shocked.

V

This trip was going to subject Raoul Palma to a novel experience, of stopping at the most expensive hotel in each city or town. It was not merely that Lanny was used to doing this, nor yet that they would be safer from vermin in these places, but because of the clients and what they would think. Painting pictures was an art, but selling them was an artifice, and Lanny told how his entire career had begun from the accident of meeting the wife of a Pittsburgh plateglass manufacturer in one of the de luxe hotels of London. In order to belong in such places one must have the right clothes, and this applied also to one's secretary or translator ; so, before being put up at the Hotel Ritz, Raoul was taken to a shop and provided with shirts and ties, and three suits of white tussah in order that he would not be dripping perspiration in the heat of midsummer Spain.

" Don't let all this corrupt you," said the host, with a grin ; and the Spaniard answered gravely that he wouldn't. He hated it with true proletarian ardour ; but Lanny had watched many pupils of the school in their attitude towards leisure-class practices, and it had been as with the monster Vice : " We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

They were going by appointment in the morning to call upon a wealthy retired shipowner. Many years ago, while visiting in Cannes, this gentleman had purchased through Lanny a Holy Virgin by one of the minor Italian painters. It was up to the expert to do him the courtesy of inquiring how he was pleased, and of seeing his collection. Señor Amengol might have got tired of some item, or he might like to hear about the Luras belonging to Señora Villareal—who could say ? Raoul wouldn't be needed, because the old gentleman spoke French of a sort ; but Lanny explained that a secretary was impressive, and it wouldn't do Raoul any harm to

learn about the manners, costumes, and interior decoration of the Catalan bourgeoisie. Raoul must bow politely, smile frequently, and listen attentively, but there was nothing to forbid his thinking anything he pleased.

They drove into the suburbs, and in a large villa on a hilltop met a rosy pudgy gentleman who might have served as any caricaturist's model of the exploiting classes. But he was a kindly and expansive soul, and evidently understood that an American art expert was a personage of consequence. He was so pleased by Lanny's appreciation of his collection that he insisted upon their staying to lunch; he produced his best foods and wines, and pressed them upon his guests with the same ardour that he pressed them into himself.

All through the meal he entertained them with a most lugubrious account of the state of his native land, for whose future he could see no gleam of hope. It was the obverse of the picture they had got on the previous evening. The elderly employer of labour had turned the business over to his sons, but he still carried the responsibility in his soul. He scolded the *imbéciles* who, without education or the least knowledge of finance and trade, presumed to dictate to their employers how a business should be run and what wages could be afforded. He raged even more fiercely at those *canallas* of Communists and other Reds who came in from abroad and by subtle arts incited the workers to discontent and rebellion against their lawful masters.

Señor Amengol revealed that the blackness of his mood was due to a demand from the stevedores' union for a raise in wages and the fact that they had the support of the politicians in office. When Lanny asked tactfully whether there might not be some possibility of ousting this left-wing government, the shipowner held out no hope, at least so far as concerned Catalonia. He declared the Reds would burn and slay in sheer blind hatred of the rich; far from any thought of buying new paintings, the old gentleman was on the verge of packing up those he had, and trying to smuggle them over the border into the more civilized land of France. "But there is a Leftist government now in France also," remarked Lanny. The Señor had apparently not heard this, and his round features drooped lower; for a minute or two he forgot the mixture of chicken, rice, and red peppers which he had upon the plate before him.

Throughout the meal Raoul Palma said not a word, the proper behaviour for an employee honoured by an invitation to sit down with his betters. Lanny guided the conversation so as to draw out the

old bourgeois, and chuckled inwardly, knowing how his friend would be bursting with rage. "*Ah, le sale cochon !*" exclaimed Raoul, when they had left the villa a safe distance behind. "He stuffed himself with food for a dozen men—and you have seen the ragged, half-famished little ones following us on the streets to beg for a centavo !"

VI

Strolling in one of the parks of Barcelona they came upon a sight which restored Raoul's hopes for the proletariat of this city. Under a spreading live-oak was a small platform, and in front of it half a dozen benches ; upon the platform stood a tall lean man of middle age, wearing dark glasses against the glare of the hot afternoon, and upon the benches sat a score or more of thin and ragged urchins. They were being taught their letters, in order that they might later on be able to read Socialist papers, leaflets, and manifestoes, and learn how their parents were exploited. At least that was the way it appeared to Raoul, and he wanted to stay and hear every word, and afterwards talk with the teacher and learn if such open-air schools were a regular affair and for how long they had been established.

Lanny, in the meantime, went to look at the Barcelona Cathedral, dark, mysterious, magnificent, with its fifteenth-century stained-glass windows. Thereafter in each city he had only to say that he was going to inspect religious art, and Raoul would set forth to look for schools and collect data to send home and use in a series of articles for the Socialist press. A happy compromise, for Raoul could find not the slightest interest in endlessly multiplied Madonnas or endlessly crucified Christs, even when he had a tiptop connoisseur to point out the details of technique. Realistic art the younger man could appreciate, especially when it dealt with the humble and the poor ; but Catholic art was one of the curses of Spain, only surpassed in its evil effects by Catholic education, Catholic politics, Catholic landlordism and banking.

VII

The car rolled on to Valencia, very old city of blue and white and golden domes, making Lanny think of Constantinople and other cities of the Levant. Here were old Roman ruins such as he was used to at Antibes, and modern buildings constructed of ancient stones. It was the city of the Cid, hero of the wars against the

Moors, of whom Lanny had read much in boyhood. Now industries of many sorts had sprung up, mostly in old buildings ill adapted thereto; the workers were crowded into tenements, many to a single room. Outside the town were groves of olives and oranges, and uncouth thousands of extremely tall date-palms; this was the most fertile part of Spain and the land was less inequitably divided. The peasant homes were primitive, but the people appeared well fed. They were rather thick-set and wore the *blusa*, a canvas shirt nearly always black.

The art expert had a letter from Emily Chattersworth to a one-time school friend who had married a Spanish landowner of this district and had some fine paintings. There was no need of a translator, so Raoul elected to study education. Lanny drove to the estate and met a lady of the old school, humane and sympathetic, unhappy over the strife and suffering she saw in the land of her adoption. But she was helpless; her husband was active in the local C.E.D.A., the reactionary political coalition which had just been defeated, and one of her sons was a leader in the Falange, the Spanish Fascist group, financed by Italian funds as in France. Señora Artieda was most happy to see an art lover from the outside world, and while she could not talk frankly on short acquaintance, she did say that she feared bloodshed and deplored the unwillingness to compromise which was a defect of the native character throughout its long and tragic history.

She possessed some beautiful French and Spanish works of art, and when he asked in his usual tactful way whether she might be willing to part with any of them, she told him that the decision would rest with her husband. He might consent, because the times were so hard and uncertain. As usual, she had but a vague idea of what the paintings might bring, and Lanny had to make guesses for her. He prepared a duplicate list of them, with his estimates, and she promised to let him know before he left Valencia.

Raoul had discovered another school, and had struck up an acquaintance with the teacher, a young woman. He had told her about the school in Cannes and the delights of teaching adult workers to read. It was like teaching the blind to see—with the difference that it could always be done. Anyone who could speak words could learn to read them. The Spanish teacher had begged him to talk to a group of her friends, and Raoul wanted to know if that would be "political." Lanny had the hard duty of pointing out to him that in times of strife such as these, talking about workers' education would almost certainly bring the talker to the attention of local authorities and cause spies to be set upon them. The fact that the reactionaries

had lost control of the national government didn't in the least mean that Valencia had become republican ; the thing for Raoul to do was to get the address of his teacher friend and send her literature about the school after they were safely out of the country.

VIII

More kilometres along the Mediterranean shore, a long and hard drive through arid mountains by rutted and dusty roads, then down to the valley of the Guadalquivir River, and they were in Seville. The most Spanish of cities it has been called, which means that its streets are narrow and its white buildings aged and crowded. Here is the biggest cathedral in the country ; but Lanny found that his studies of its art were interfered with by the flitting of innumerable female figures, many with the head covered by a black lace mantilla. It was supposed to hide the face, but the ladies had to see where they were walking so as not to collide with the enormous stone columns, and that gave opportunity for side glances and revelations of dark eyes and other allurements. The ladies came here to have their sins forgiven, but it would appear that some had not yet accumulated a sufficiency.

Raoul was moved to discourse upon the position of women in Spain, which was now changing fast but had constituted an evil second only to the woes of the poor. This visit to the confessional had constituted the sole form of public life which women of the middle and upper classes enjoyed, and then the mantilla had been obligatory. The rest of the time they had spent behind the walls of the home, to which men not members of the family were rarely invited. Raoul showed his friend the *rejas*, the heavy iron bars at low windows through which it was permitted for the virgins to be courted by their lovers. Sex and superstition had made up their lives, if you could believe an ardent Marxist ; the priests and the women had kept Spain out of the current of modern progress.

Lanny had read poetry and listened to music about Seville, and was prepared for the tinkling of guitars, the clacking of castanets, and voices singing on these hot summer nights ; but the tunes were seldom gay, and the aspect of the singers gave him the impression that they had required artificial stimulation. The men on the streets wore conventional European clothes, unless they were decked out for a festival ; the workers wore blouses or shirts which might have come from the factories of New York or London, and generally

they were faded and dirty. Lanny decided that the poets had lied, and he understood why Plato had excluded them from his ideal republic.

The travellers put up at the Hotel Alfonso XIII, regardless of expense and of Raoul's dislike of the name. Next morning they drove out to the estate of the Señora Villareal, through the famous river marshes on which bulls were bred. The mansion was several miles back from the river, and the property extended for miles into the hills, some of which were covered with ancient olive trees while others were given up to flocks of sheep and goats. The steward was making his morning inspection tour, and a *gañán*, a servant who looked after the bulls, got into the rear seat of the car and guided them through valleys and over ridges, until Lanny felt that he was in the very heart of Spain. Here and there were the usual red-clay hovels, and half-naked children with black hair straggling into their eyes, staring at the strange apparition, perhaps the first vehicle they had ever seen moving of its own accord. The men toiling in the fields seldom lifted their eyes, for whatever it was it did not concern them. They lived on bread and onions, a diet which kept them going but did not provide a superfluous ounce of flesh. Lanny recalled the travel diary of the Englishman, Arthur Young, in the last days of the *ancien régime* of France; he guessed that the time of Spain was coming soon.

IX

The steward, a sturdy, black-moustached horseman, wore the *traje corto*, long narrow trousers with *zahones*, a short leather apron in front; a white linen shirt with narrow collar, a short jacket with a wide band instead of a belt, and a broad-brimmed grey felt hat. He greeted the visitors with formal courtesy and rode back to the mansion with them. He opened up the building and ordered the *gañán* to unbar the windows and draw back the curtains of the drawing-room. All the sunlight of the province of Seville streamed in, and upon the wall in front of Lanny gleamed a picture of a grape harvest of Valencia, the birthplace of Sorolla y Bastida, who had revived the art of his native land. A work bright with all the colours of the rainbow, and perhaps Spain had once been like that, its people hearty and laughing; but surely they weren't like that now, and Lanny had difficulty in keeping sociology out of his art criticism.

Photographs would be necessary to the proper marketing of

these works, so another servant was summoned, and the two of them lifted each picture in turn from the walls and placed it in the proper light. He set his camera upon a chair and photographed each in turn. The steward watched in grave silence while the visitor measured each canvas and entered the data in his note-book, and sometimes studied the brushwork through a lens. He was required to say whether each of these works was genuine, and he knew, alas, that many false signatures have been painted upon canvas; also many paintings have been relined and prettified.

The process took time, and when it was over the steward invited them over to his cottage, where a maid served bread and wine and olives, also delicious ripe melons which had been cooled by keeping them wrapped in wet cloths. Señor Lopez spoke neither English nor French, but with a capable translator there was no difficulty in finding out what he thought as to the state of his country. In his view there were no agricultural problems which could not be solved by firm commands backed up by a German-made pistol. As for the wider view, there was the Guardia Civil, of which Lanny had noticed groups riding here and there in their uniforms of grey with yellow stripes and black hats made of patent leather. As for the nation as a whole, this believer in law and order was certain that it had had enough of government by camouflaged anarchists; he had received information that its days were precisely numbered, and he and his neighbours were prepared to do their part when the hour struck. He said this without any thought of reserve, because he was talking to a friend of the Señora, *un hombre rico* who would surely understand.

"If we are going to get any of these paintings out of the country, it might be well to start soon," suggested Lanny. "Should I not perhaps mention this to the Senora?"

"She has two or three weeks yet," replied the steward. "And anyhow, I do not think there will be serious trouble in these parts. Our friends will land at Cádiz, and all this country will be in our hands in a few hours. We have never let the *perrería* get the better of us here in Seville."

So that was that. Lanny drove back to the city and hammered out on his little portable typewriter a report to the owner of the paintings. He was leaving for Madrid, he told her, and she might address him at the Palace Hotel. He posted the letter, and in the cool of the evening strolled with his friend to the Kursaal Internacional to enjoy Andalusian music and dancing, and learn that some Spaniards cherished the dream of happiness, even though their reality was so dreary and bitter.

I

Early next morning the voyagers retraced their way up the river valley to Córdoba, where they divided their attention between the cathedral and the schools, and next day set out through the country known as La Mancha towards Madrid. All the way as they motored over these hot wheat-fields and lonely hills there rode ahead of them upon a boney nag a cadaverous figure wearing heavy armour and carrying a long lance. The elderly gentleman had left his comfortable home and ridden forth into an unlovely world in the effort to adjust some of its manifold wrongs. Lanny felt himself a blood-brother to this woeful knight; hardly less futile, and considered by many to be equally touched in the head. Like the ill-fortuned Don Quixote de la Mancha, he found upon this *camino real* no lovely damsels to rescue, and as for the ogres and oppressors of this new time, they were not to be overthrown in single-handed combat by the most valorous of knights-errant.

Lanny's companion was no Sancho Panza to restrain him, but another dreamer, born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards. Raoul was tormented in his conscience because he was sleeping in royal beds and eating the fat of the land while that land was hanging on the edge of doom; he wondered if it was not his duty to part from Lanny and endeavour to arouse the people to their danger—or perhaps take a plane to Paris and warn the outside world. Lanny appeased him by promising that as soon as they reached Madrid he would hammer out on his typewriter what he had learned and air-mail it to Jean Longuet, editor of *Le Populaire*. The message would not have to be signed, for Lanny could put in a key sentence which would identify him to this acquaintance of old standing.

All right; the younger Don Quixote accepted that programme. They drove as fast as the roads permitted, and took only part of the day to see Toledo, an ancient city that is like a fortress on a granite rock, with the River Tagus flowing through a gorge round three sides of it. The houses were built like fortresses, many with blank walls and heavy iron-studded doors. The streets were so narrow and winding that it seemed as if you were in one building all the time. In many of the streets, if a car stopped, all others had to stop too; but as a rule there were no others. Toledo is famed for the manufacture of sharp steel to be plunged into human bodies, and to the visitors the whole place spoke of cruelty and fear.

On a high hill stands an Alcázar, built upon the foundations of an Arab fortress, a huge square structure then used as a military

academy. Lanny gazed at its massive granite walls and called it another product of fear. Having no psychic gifts, he thought about old-time battles and sieges. All the five hundred kilometres between Seville and here he had thought and talked about the Cid and his foes, about the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance, about the cruel and bigoted monarchs of Castile ; but he had heard no tread of modern boots upon that dry and dusty highway, no clatter of heavy guns, no rumble of camions and tanks. The walls of Toledo's Alcázar echoed only to the footsteps of tourists ; no towers trembled, no granite blocks crashed. The veil of the future was more impenetrable than all the fortifications constructed by Moors or Spaniards, and through it no single shell-burst was heard, no groan or scream of dying Falangista.

XI

Comfortably ensconced in a suite in the Palace Hotel, Lanny set up his portable typewriter and hammered out the letter to the Socialist editor in Paris. The opening sentence read : " This is the friend who brought you the sketches of a young German woman artist." Reading the letter aloud to Raoul, Lanny omitted this, explaining : " I have referred to a personal matter which Longuet will recognize." He put an air-mail stamp on the letter, and took it outside and dropped it into the letter-box on a tramcar which stopped at the corner. That was one of Madrid's contributions to civilization, a letter-box on everyone of its ancient tramcars, and he wondered why American cities had not adopted the idea.

Madrid in the month of July was like the other great capitals of Europe : " everybody " was out of town. That meant pretty nearly all who were rich enough to be counted. If their children enjoyed playing on the beach, the family had a villa at San Sebastian or Biarritz, or perhaps on the coast of Normandy ; if the adults liked to climb mountains, they had a camp in the Guadarramas or perhaps a chalet in Switzerland. Lanny had sent his letters of introduction by post, and permission to view private collections came to him by the same means.

But there were many in this great capital who did not own villas or camps or chalets, and who had to last out in spite of the heat. The stores closed from noon to three o'clock, so that all might have the siesta. When the sun went down and the heat had been dissipated from pavements and walls of houses, people would come out and sit on their doorsteps and chat, or stroll on the boulevards and

greet their friends. They talked loudly, discussed with large gestures and listened to blaring loud-speakers. The dinner hour was at nine or ten in the evening, and theatres and entertainments began at half-past ten or eleven.

Two travellers left their hotel and walked on the brightly lighted streets, interested in the sights which were new to them both. Raoul had been born and raised within a hundred kilometres of this city, but the poor do not travel in Spain, and he had left his native village only when his father had been killed in the days of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. A penniless youth, he had climbed alone through the snowy passes of the Pyrenees. On the Riviera he had earned his bread as a shoe-clerk, and had taught himself French and English by writing the words on slips of paper and memorizing them while waiting for customers.

Now these two looked at Madrid and found it much like Europe and not so much like Spain. Here was no stuffy medieval "old town," like Seville and Toledo; here were suburbs spreading over a vast plain. Here were wide boulevards, a subway, and other modern features, whether you chose to call them improvements or what. Anyhow, you could drive a car with pleasure, and guess that some of the people you met possessed bath-tubs. Men of the machine age enjoy the novelty of looking at relics and ruins, dungeons and torture instruments, swords and lances and armour and the like; but a little goes a long way, and they come back to the world they know and which holds out some hope to their children.

XII

In one way or another a Franco-American tourist managed to come in contact with members of the prosperous classes. There were some of the old-fashioned kind who stayed locked up in their stone mansions. There was one decayed aristocrat who motored to town to meet what he imagined was a fabulously wealthy American camouflaged as an art expert. There were younger sons who had posts in the government or the Army. All could be led to talk politics, and few had any good word to say about the existing government, which had now been in office for five months. The most charitable called it incompetent, and considered this fortunate, because what it wished to do was altogether evil. All agreed that it must somehow be replaced, and quickly, because the country was drifting into bankruptcy and chaos. But they were less free than people in the south in saying what that something might be. Either

they hadn't been taken into the confidence of the conspirators or they were more aware of the need of caution.

Lanny and Raoul chose not to eat in the fashionable restaurants, for there you were escorted to a *table à deux*, and it would have been the height of impropriety to speak to a stranger. But if you ate in some cheap café you had neighbours who would address you as a matter of course, and the magic word *americano* would start them pouring out their hearts. Here, too, many would scold at the government, but for the opposite reason, that it couldn't keep its mind made up; it was composed of polite old gentlemen who couldn't bear to disturb things or to displease their subordinates, the bureaucrats, no matter what election results came in. The office-holders of modern Spain resembled the clergy in good King Charles's golden days, who sang :

That whatsoever king shall reign
I'll still be vicar of Bray, sir !

The travellers were pleased to find how well informed the average Madrileño was concerning the affairs of his native land. They had imagined they were bringing dark secrets, but found that the workers of all sorts, even the clerks and teachers, knew who their enemies were, their names and titles or ranks in the Army. How could anyone fail to know, when these people met openly in certain swank cafés and made speeches and drank toasts to the counter-revolution ? How could anybody fail to know that they meant violence, when night after night their young gangsters would waylay some friend of the Republic and shoot him on the steps of his home ?

Life in Madrid was turning into a nightmare ; the people were bewildered and helpless—for civilized men and women are in the habit of leaving the preservation of law and order to the government. Could working men and clerks and school-teachers go out and fight ? Just how would they set about such a thing ? Where would they get guns, and who would show them how to shoot ?

XIII

Strolling on the Calle Santa Catalina, Raoul noticed a sign : "*Arte Popular Español*." He said : "That must be the shop of Constancia de la Mora." He explained that this was a member of the ruling classes—grand-daughter of Maura, Conservative leader and Premier under King Alfonso—who had rebelled against her family's control and become a Socialist.

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Lanny. "I remember. The one who divorced her husband. The Spaniards on the Riviera were in a dither over it—the first time such a thing had ever happened in Spain, they said."

"Now she is married to an Army officer who commands the Air Corps, and who ought to be useful to us if it really comes to a showdown with the Fascists. She earns her living by selling the products of peasant handicraft."

"Let's go in and meet her," said Lanny.

Raoul was surprised. He was familiar with customs among the workers, but had never approached the grand-daughter of a premier, so far as he knew. "Will you tell her who you are?" he asked.

"Why should I? If she has things to sell, and we wish to examine them, that will be enough."

A tall dark woman of thirty or so came forward saying graciously: "*Buenos días, Señores.*" When Lanny asked if she spoke English she answered in the affirmative. She did not mention that she had got a good part of her education in England.

"I am seeing your country for the first time," he explained. "I should like to have something characteristic to take home to my mother."

The shop displayed many sorts of peasant products: embroidery, linens, pottery, furniture, all with Spanish touches. The grand-daughter of a premier manifested no zeal as a saleswoman, but left the customer to look and choose. When he said: "I think that linens always make an acceptable gift, because they are so durable," she answered: "These will last a lifetime."

Lanny picked out half a dozen fine table-cloths and a couple of dozen napkins. He could imagine Beauty saying to her guests: "My son brought these from Madrid." They would talk about them, and perhaps Beauty would add: "They came from the shop of Constanca de la Mora; you remember, the one who got the divorce and married the aviation officer."

It was common enough for French and English ladies of title to set themselves up in some sort of leisure-class trade. Their friends would think it was spunky and would patronize them on principle; tourists would come, in order to see what a countess or a duchess looked like, and to be able to tell their friends what she had said. But to set up a shop in Madrid, and then heap a divorce on top of it—to Spanish conservatives it had seemed like the death of an era.

Lanny's contribution to the feminist movement amounted to nearly a thousand pesetas, enough to constitute a red-letter day in the life of any premier's grand-daughter. Señora Constanca

manifested no elation, but made the change and inquired where the package should be delivered. Lanny replied: "I will come for it in my car."

XIV

Outside, the two adventurers discussed this episode. Lanny remarked: "That's a fine, straightforward woman; one that you could trust. You say her husband commands the Air Force?"

"So I have been told."

"Well, he would be a key man. We ought to make sure that he knows what is going on." When Raoul agreed, Lanny added: "I believe I'll take a chance on her. You wait in the car, and I'll ask to talk with her alone."

He got his car and drove to the shop. Entering, he said to the lady: "Señora, I am a stranger who has been travelling in your country for the past three weeks, and I have information which ought to be of interest to you. Might I speak to you in private?"

His manner was respectful, and she showed no surprise; she was living in a world of conspiracies. There was another woman in the shop, apparently a clerk, and without a word the Señora led the customer into a small rear office and closed the door.

Lanny came at once to the point. "I am acting on a sudden impulse, because I sympathize with your ideas and feel moved to trust you. I am not at liberty to reveal my views to others—to do so would close all my sources of information. For that reason I hope you will not ask my name, nor mention me to anyone; make what you please of what I tell you, but forget my connection with it."

"Certainly, Señor; as you wish."

"Most of what I know I learned before I came to Spain, from those who are plotting against your government. Travelling through the south, I have gathered so much confirmation that I feel certain of the details. There is to be an uprising against your government, financed by Juan March, the Duque de Alba, and others of that sort. General Francisco Franco is their chosen leader and he is to fly from the Canaries to Morocco and from there to Cádiz to head the movement. The time is short now."

The woman showed little emotion. "We have had this dreadful news for a long time," she told him. "We have worried ourselves sick about it, and have done what little we can, but it is not much."

"But, Señora, you have the government, have you not?"

"Alas, we have no government. We have been generous, and have left the government to older and wiser heads—or so they are

esteemed and so we were led to believe. We of the Left have not one single representative in the Cabinet. You have no doubt heard the government denounced as anarchist or Communist——”

“I hear that everywhere.”

“There is not one anarchist, not one Communist, not even one Socialist in the Cabinet. We of the Left wished to be polite, and moderate, to move gradually and not give provocation; so our government is composed of lawyers and scholars, liberals and old-time democrats—men who have devoted their long lives to the cause of Spanish enlightenment, of a Spanish republic—but now they are tired and must not be too greatly disturbed. They are kindly and trusting, they do not wish to believe too much evil of mankind. We go to them and warn them, we plead, we all but fall down on our knees before them—but we cannot shake their faith in orderly processes, their belief that the decision rendered at the ballot box is sacred, that the will of the Spanish people is and must be inviolate.”

“But the people, Señora! Can they not be aroused and organized?”

“That is our only hope, that the workers will defend the government in spite of itself. But they cannot do it until they are attacked, otherwise they would be called insurrectionists and criminals.”

“And your husband?”

“My husband has gone again and again to his superiors; he has risked his influence and authority. What little power he has he has used. The known Fascists have been put out of the Air Force, and we believe that those now in the service are loyal. That will gain us a little time, we hope.”

“But your enemies will have planes from Italy and Germany, and they will overwhelm you.”

“You really believe that, Señor?”

“I have it on authority which cannot be doubted. They will send transport planes and bring troops from Morocco, and your workers will be overwhelmed before they can start to rise. You have seen how they did it in their own countries, and they mean to do it in one after another, so long as there is a democratic government to oppose them or a labour movement to denounce them.”

Lanny was prepared to see upon this Spanish lady's face that look of helpless grief and despair which he had learned to know so well upon the faces of those who had escaped from Italy, and then from Germany. But instead he saw anger; for she was of a race which did not give up easily. “Our people will fight!” she declared. “With whatever weapons we can find! We will never let our government be taken from us!”

"Then you must act now, Señora."

Constancia said: "I will talk to my husband. I will go once more to the few friends I have left."

"If the government wishes to survive, it must arrest the conspirators. It must arrest them by the hundreds: Franco, Sanjurjo, Goded, Mola—all of them! It must act at once."

"They will not act, Señor. They are incapable of any such initiative. They are too good—or you may say too stupid, too befuddled, too weak! It would be called a *coup d'état*, and they dread the scandal, the excitement, the abuse."

As he rose to leave, she said: "Thank you, Señor. Give me more information if you get it, and be sure I will make what use of it I can."

"Very well," he replied. "I will give you a code name so that I can write to you. Let it be *Popular*." He pronounced it as a Spanish word, with the accent on the last syllable. It means, of the people, or having to do with the people. It didn't fit Lanny Budd, but it fitted his dream, and hers. *Arte Popular Español* meant more than that the peasant women of Spain were to weave linens and sell them to rich ladies; it meant that the Spanish workers were to own great co-operatives with the best machinery and make abundance for themselves. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

20

Disastrous Twilight

ONE of the sights of Madrid about which Lanny had been hearing since his youth was the great Museo del Prado. Here were some twenty-five hundred paintings assembled under one eighteenth-century roof by successive kings of Spain. It was not merely a Spanish but a European collection: Murillo, El Greco, and Velasquez, each with a Salon of his own; Goya with a Rotunda; van

Dyck and Rubens with a Long Gallery ; Raphael and Correggio, Titian and Tintoretto, each with his Cabinet.

One would not really know the vigour and fire of Velasquez until one came here ; for this Salon and the entrance halls leading to it contained more than half the total of his works, beginning with his youth and ending with his death. Here were portraits, landscapes, and historical subjects, religious and mythological subjects—did he in his secret heart distinguish between these latter ? Here was his *Adoration of the Magi*, a conventional religious scene ; here also his *Forge of Vulcan*, in which a heavenly messenger comes to the ancient Greek smiths. It is supposed to be Apollo telling them about the infidelity of Aphrodite ; but Lanny preferred to say that the god of light was asking them to cease from the forging of deadly weapons. Lanny himself would have been willing to take up the worship of the "Far-darter," if only he would have promised such a consummation.

And then *Los Borrachos*, the peasants having a Bacchic festival, worshipping a god whom Lanny had never favoured. And the famous portrait of the royal princess with her ladies-in-waiting, and Velasquez himself visible in a mirror, painting the picture. Also *The Surrender of Breda*, historical painting of the end of a battle which Lanny had never before heard. The names of the princes meant nothing to him, but he observed that they behaved to each other with a sort of courtesy which the world had forgotten. In those days fighting had been a game, and the victors thanked the vanquished for fine competition ; but in these modern days it was carried on with deadly hatred amid poison-gas clouds of the mind.

Also, Goya, painter out of love with his time. He was represented here by many portraits, among them *King Charles IV and His Family*. An extraordinary thing to see degeneracy of the human body, and realize how it was accompanied by degeneracy of the intellect. This royal family had been caricatured in the most cruel and bitter way—and yet they had paid for it and liked it ! This one painting revealed more about royal Spain than all the palaces which Lanny had visited.

And then the gentle Murillo, with his lovely dreams of heavenly beings. These were the images which the black-veiled women carried in their hearts on their way to the cathedral in Seville, the painter's home ; Lanny was content to forget for a while the degradation of religion and remember that a mother and child were not changed because a painter had put yellow circles over the tops of their heads. Nor did it trouble him that in so many cases the woman

had been the painter's mistress, for Lanny's own mother had played that role with success during most of his childhood.

These hours in the Prado, among the most memorable of Lanny's life, he passed in the company of tourists, a large proportion of them Americans, wandering through the long rooms and gazing in wonder, real or simulated. For the most part they were silent, but two ladies with some sort of Middle Western accent brought a smile to the face of an expert, a smile which lasted him a long while. One had a catalogue in her hand and was studying it with a worried expression. "Where is the Oney?" she asked her companion. "Somebody told me to be sure and see an unfinished Virgin and Child by Oney, but I don't find it in the catalogue."

"Oney?" repeated the other. "Are you sure you've got the name right?"

"I wrote it down," was the reply. "George O-n-e-y. How else could it be spelled?"

Lanny thought it the part of kindness to come to the rescue. "Pardon me, madam," he said. "Giorgione is one name in Italian, and it is that way in the catalogue."

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" stammered the lady, and moved on quickly to hide her confusion.

II

What Raoul desired to visit was the new and still unfinished University City—Ciudad Universitaria de Madrid. It stood at the north-western approaches to the capital, a tract of a thousand acres on level or terraced land, with the blue Sierras for a background and the great Escorial as part of the landscape. Thus the past and future of Spain confronted each other. The Escorial had been the religious centre of the court, at once a church and a palace, built by the bigoted and cruel Philip II, and still the focal point of reaction; while the new university was rapidly making itself the centre of scientific progress, and of free literature and the arts. Impossible to keep modern thought out of it; impossible to keep modern thought out of any part of the earth where there were telephones, printing-presses, radio, and other means of spreading knowledge to mankind.

Embarrassing to a Marxist to have to admit that this magnificent conception was attributable to the hated Alfonso XIII. But it was true that he had been its promoter, and had proceeded to raise the funds by an original and characteristic device—a national lottery. Every spring the people of Spain were invited to purchase fifty-five

thousand tickets valued at one thousand pesetas each ; they were sold in small fractions amid great excitement, and it was estimated that in the course of ten years the profits would provide the entire cost of the higher intellectual life of the Spanish people.

Lanny drove his friend out to the grounds. Eight or ten of the buildings had been completed ; the most urgently needed, the centres of medicine and pharmacy, having been started first. No imitation Gothic, such as you would find too often in America, but modern structures adapted to the work of scientists. The building of the Faculty of Letters, recently finished, had cost three million dollars ; it was built on three sides of a square, and attached to the rear façade was a circular auditorium. Raoul became enraptured over the interior of this structure. It was empty in summer, but his mind's eye saw it packed with young men and women, absorbing sound knowledge and constructive ideals. The forces generated here would spread over the whole nation and scatter the night of superstition and reaction ; the light of humanity and justice would penetrate to the darkest corners of old Spain. So Raoul dreamed, and Lanny proved once more that he possessed no clairvoyant gifts ; he strolled through one fine structure after another and still heard no thunders of artillery, no crash of falling walls, no death-cries of young Socialists or Communists, democrats or liberals.

III

As when a summer thunderstorm is gathering, and black clouds form over the horizon, and rise higher, rolling like giant wheels in the sky, throwing out wisps and streamers and dropping long grey curtains of rain ; gradually they spread, and the blue sky is blotted out, the rumble of the thunder grows louder and more menacing, and the lances of lightning stab into the earth ; men cease their work and stand gazing upwards with troubled thoughts, and the birds are hushed, thinking perhaps that night is coming, or perhaps the end of the bird-world : so it was in the capital city of Spain in that second week of July 1936.

One of the consequences of paying a hundred and fifty pesetas a day for your hotel suite was that you could have a radio for the asking. Lanny had one, and he and his friend would sit and listen to what the democratic government of Spain wished its people to know. There was a long building strike, and the government very much wished the strikers to return to work, because they were only playing into the hands of reactionaries who maintained that the

people were incapable of self-government and self-restraint. There was another station belonging to the Marxist unions, and this advised the workers to stand firm, because it was the only way to compel the bourgeois government to act against the reactionaries. This conflict of opinion must have been confusing to the ordinary Madrileño.

There came the news that the Falangistas in Valencia had seized the radio station, having got their dates mixed. They proceeded to announce the counter-revolution ahead of time, and then, discovering their error, they were embarrassed, and retired. Raoul said: "Surely *that* will wake up the government!" But apparently it wasn't going to.

Late one night, coming in from a concert, the travellers turned the dial and heard the news that José Castillo, commander of a group of police guards who had been selected for their reliability, had been murdered; he had gone for a stroll on the street with his wife, and the Fascist gangsters had shot him in the back. This crime was denounced over the radio, and both the hearers knew what fury it would awaken in the hearts of the workers. Once more Raoul said: "Now they *must* act!"

All Madrid waited for them to act next day. The conspiracy had been proved many times over, and proved by deeds as well as by words. Everybody knew who had murdered Castillo—except those heads of the government who believed in democracy and peace, in civil liberties and freedom of speech, so ardently that they couldn't make any move against the sworn enemies of these blessings.

Still graver news that night. Castillo's guards had gone to the Fascist headquarters and carried away the Fascist leader in Madrid, Calvo Sotelo by name, and shot him to death. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is an old formula, known in Spain long before the Christian religion arrived there. Raoul said that it did not apply to the class struggle. "They have a right to kill us, but we have no right to kill them. You will see what a difference it makes."

And it did, in very truth. Sotelo and others of his sort had shot hundreds of workers and peasants all over Spain, and that had not counted with bourgeois newspapers at home or abroad. But here was a man of prominence, a member of the ruling classes, the man who was to have been made *Presidente* when the *coup d'état* succeeded; and so this was murder, "most foul, strange, and unnatural." Next day in the Cortes the Fascist political leader, Gil Robles, arose and said: "His blood is on the heads of those people who support the Popular Front. The day is not far off when the violence you have unleashed will turn back on you." After that it was in order for the counter-revolution to be launched.

IV

Lanny had made all his plans to leave Madrid the next morning. Picture deals have to be put through promptly, before one party or the other has a change of mind. He had several under way, with members of the wealthy classes who thought they could get their art works shipped out of Spain in spite of government decrees. The two travellers had their bags and bundles of linen stowed in the car, and set out on the road to Barcelona.

Stopping to see Alcalá de Henares, the birth-place of Cervantes, who now had the honour of having the town's best hotel named after him. Stopping at Guadalajara to look at the Palacio, now an orphanage. Another town where Lanny might have had clairvoyant shudders, but didn't! Most of the time his thoughts were on the radio in his car; a delightful invention, whereby one could travel and still be at home, or wherever one wished to be. The Fascists in Madrid had announced a state funeral for their hero, but it had been forbidden. An outrageous violation of civil liberties, declared a gentleman in the little café where the travellers ate lunch.

Then a town called Calatayud, made all of brown clay from its crumbling hills, in which many of the people had dug themselves caves. Here the travellers turned off the highway, for in more distant hills lay that village where Raoul had been born and to which he had been promised a visit. He had written his older brother, saying that he was coming, and had received a badly spelled reply—for learning in the Palma family was not congenital, but had to be acquired, so Raoul said. The brother, back from the Argentine, called himself a *sindicalisto*, and was trying to organize a group of very poor peasants into a co-operative, so that they could dam a small stream, first for irrigation and then for power and light.

The car crept along on a road which was not much more than a mule-track. Lanny had seen much poverty here and elsewhere, but never more gaunt and haggard humans than he found in this lonely valley in the naked hills of Aragon, bitter cold in winter and blazing hot in summer. "Forgotten by the Holy Trinity and the Blessed Virgin and remembered only by the tax-collector," said Estéban Palma; a sturdy fellow, swarthy as an Arab, and generously covered with curly black hair. He had let it grow on his face and had a magnificent bush; when his brother commented on it he sang an old Andalusian song about "whiskers such as have not been seen on earth since those of Jesus Christ." No irreverence intended, it

was Spanish naïveté; they really believed in their many gods and all the gods' physical details.

Estéban was a great person to these forgotten *patanes*; he had been a sailor and visited most of the ports of the world; whatever he told them was gospel. Now he had promised that an American millionaire straight out of the cinema was coming to visit them in a motor-car that went like the wind and was upholstered inside like a *palacio real*. The peasants had seen old Ford cars when they went to market, and few of them but had been to a cinema at least once. Now they gathered and stared as if it had been one of those chariots that used to come down from the skies with passengers robed in light. But at the same time they did not forget their dignity; they stood erect and seemed to be saying: "It is true that we are in rags but we are not to be mocked or humiliated."

Raoul remembered some of them, the grown-up boys with whom he had played. They exchanged reminiscences, and the visitors strolled about looking at the sights. Later they went to the low dark hut without glass which Estéban called home, and ate dry hard bread, dried olives, cheese, and such herbs as had not been scratched up by a neighbour's chickens. One of the improvements of which the co-operative mind was dreaming was an enclosure in which all the community chickens could scratch one another. Estéban had no delusions about the human chickens, he said; they would scratch one another, too—but they might be taught better, and now was the time, while Spain was on the move into the modern world.

He announced to the *patanes* the presence of a miracle. The *Señor americano* possessed one of those wonder-boxes whereby you could hear voices speaking in Madrid and even in Barcelona. The *Señor* would be graciously pleased to exhibit its powers; so all the children, and such men and women as were not at work in the fields, gathered round and listened to spot news from the gathering storm of civil war: a government spokesman announcing that the Cortes had been suspended and appealing to the populace to remain quiet and have confidence in the authorities. After the radio was turned off, Estéban made a speech, explaining why the landlords and money-lenders wanted to destroy the people's government, and why the workers and peasants must be prepared to defend it with their lives. The determination of this audience was made manifest, but Lanny and Raoul could not see with what weapons these ill-nourished victims of land-erosion were going to meet planes and machine-guns brought from Italy and Germany with the money of Juan March and the Duque de Alba.

V

Raoul had said : " Estéban will invite us to spend the night, but if you do you will be devoured by fleas." So Lanny explained that he was pressed for time and travelled by night as well as by day. He presented to the hairy ex-sailor a couple of hundred-peseta notes to be used for the benefit of the co-operative, and the announcement of this brought the first enthusiasm upon the faces of these depressed countrymen. The pair departed in a blaze of glory, and Lanny felt that he had learned more about Spain in this village than in any of the great cities.

They started down the mule-track, with twilight falling and headlights causing ruts and gullies to stand out like black canyons across the road. They had to crawl along, and had not got very far when they heard loud shots and the pounding of hoofs behind them. Lanny had laid his Budd automatic on the seat between him and his fellow-passenger, and now as he stopped the car he put his hand upon it. But it was a quite harmless hold-up ; a peasant fellow, a *criado* in worn and patched clothing, riding a tall and boney mule which evidently had been pushed hard, for it was white with lather and breathing like the bellows of a forge. "*Deténganse Vds., Señores !*" the man had been shouting, and now : "*Perdone Vd. !*"—for no matter how ragged, he would be polite.

He made a speech, and Lanny, who had been picking up words rapidly, heard *pintura* several times, and also the name of *mi amo, el Señor Don Pedro Ruiz Bustamente y Bastida*, who lived somewhere in this neighbourhood and who had learned that the *gentilhombre americano* was coming for a visit and had sent his servant to invite him to inspect the *pintura* which he, Don Pedro Ruiz Bustamente y Bastida, possessed, and which the *Señor americano* might like to purchase and take away with him ; *pintura espléndida*, declared the messenger, and explained that he had ridden to the village, and finding the Señores had already departed, had come as rapidly as a *mulo perezoso* could be driven.

All this Raoul translated ; and Lanny said : " Ask him who painted the *pintura*." But the *criado*, or man-servant, shook his head ; not even the learned Don Pedro Ruiz Bustamente y Bastida knew that ; but it was a *pintura mucha magnífica, gran*—the messenger stretched his arms wide. It was a portrait of Don Pedro's ancestor, the great Comendador Humfredo Fernando Bustamente y Bastida.

Lanny asked of his friend: "What do you suppose are the chances of their having a worth-while painting?"

"It might be anything," Raoul replied. "These valleys were fertile once upon a time, and this is an old family which I knew about in childhood. Their mansion may be falling into ruins, but that wouldn't hurt a painting."

Lanny said: "All right, let's go."

"Don't spend the night," warned Raoul again. "There might be bed-bugs as well as fleas."

VI

The car was turned in the narrow road, and followed the *mulo perezoso*, which means lazy, and after an hour or so of the laziest possible motoring they entered an estate with gate-posts falling over and grass growing high in the badly rutted drive. In the darkness they couldn't see much of the mansion, but by the lights of the car they observed a strip of cornice hanging loose over the door; nobody had bothered either to fasten it up or to take it down. Lanny took the precaution to slip the automatic into his pocket before they stepped out of the car and entered this almost black building—the only light visible coming from one paraffin lamp in the entrance hall.

"*Strvase Vd. entrar,*" said a voice, and thus Lanny made the acquaintance of what he thought was the most depressing human specimen he had ever gazed upon. Don Pedro Ruiz Bustamente y Bastida was about six feet three inches tall, but narrower than a small man, and stoop-shouldered as if he were trying to get down to a level where he could talk comfortably with others. He had raven-black hair which he might have cut for himself, and which had not been brushed since. Apparently he had recently shaved himself and made two cuts on his chin. He had a long thin fox-face, with a hanging jaw, wet drooping lips, and bleary eyes. Lanny thought: "Either he has just been on a spree, or else he takes dope."

The master of the estate had put on for this occasion a black velvet suit with knickerbockers and dirty ruffed sleeves; like a stage costume which has been worn by a generation of actors in a stock theatre. Doubtless it was a heritage, taken out of a dusty old trunk. He bowed low, and made a speech of welcome which might have come from that king of Castile who had a lisp and who has caused hundreds of millions of Spaniards ever since to mispronounce the letter "c." All the formalities of courtesy were complied with,

even to the pouring of glasses of lukewarm and rather sour wine. The visitors were escorted into a large apartment which might once have been a ballroom ; it seemed to be entirely bare, and Lanny formed the guess that Don Pedro had been living by selling off his furniture bit by bit, and perhaps using the trim of his mansion for the kitchen fires.

Against a wall near the door was a painting with no frame. Doubtless there had once been a splendid gold frame and it had been carted to town and sold. The canvas was held by four nails, one at each corner, and had a bulge showing that it had been rolled up ; the dust, which had only been partly brushed off, suggested that it had been deposited in an attic or perhaps in a corner of this room. Anyhow, here it was, and Lanny advanced upon it, with Don Pedro holding the lamp—which was fortunate, for Lanny might have dropped it. One look, and in his soul there was a shout : A Goya !

Another of those many pictures—Lanny had sold two of them in his life, and had just been looking at others in the Prado—in which a painter who was a revolutionary ahead of his time had depicted his rulers and masters with such subtle art as to make them into scarecrows without their being able to realize it. He had painted them taller than natural, with longer and thinner hands and smaller feet—all those symptoms of degeneracy which they esteemed as proofs of noble blood. He had painted their elaborate uniforms and orders, their gold lace and ruffles and jewelled sword handles exactly true to life, and so magnificent that they forgot about their features. He had painted these as it were idealized in reverse : they were cunning, cruel, bestial, greedy, stupid, whatever they had been, only more so. Several kings, several court circles—and there was no recorded case of one who had objected to being held up to the dismay of posterity !

Here was the portrait of El Gran Comendador Humfredo Fernando Bustamante y Bastida. Lanny had never heard of him, but that proved little. He was the living image of his great-great-grandson, except that one was a live and eager fox while the other was a sick and drooping one. He was painted in the very gorgeous uniform of the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece, with a collar composed of alternate links of furisons and double steels, interlaced to form the letter B, which stood for Burgundy, where the order was established more than five hundred years ago. How many Comendadores the Spanish branch had had in that time—and doubtless every single one of them having his portrait painted in uniform !

With his handkerchief Lanny brushed off the dust from the

lower right corner of the canvas and looked for the signature, but there was none. Even if there had been, it wouldn't have been proof positive, since many painters have had pupils who imitated their work, often with help from the master, so that with darkness and layers of dust the best expert might be in doubt. But Lanny felt pretty sure that he had come upon a Goya.

VII

A moral problem of no small proportions. If Lanny was right, this painting would bring twenty or thirty thousand dollars. So far in his life he had never taken advantage of anybody in a picture deal ; he had always said exactly what he was buying or selling, and what he considered a reasonable price. If he dealt in that way with this decayed Spanish grandee he would say : " I shall have to see the picture by daylight, and perhaps ask a colleague to come and advise me. If it is a real Goya, I may be able to find some American collector to pay you one or two hundred thousand pesetas for it, and he will pay me a commission, so that you will owe me nothing. All this, of course, dependent upon my being permitted to carry the painting out of Spain."

But hovering in the background watching the proceedings Lanny observed a dark-eyed, gypsy-looking young woman with overpainted lips and cheeks, and he guessed what was her position in this household and where the money would go. A swarm of relatives would gather like buzzards, and a poor degenerate would drink himself to death, or slip into his grave by the quicker route of cocaine or morphine. At the same time Lanny remembered the news he had been hearing over the radio, the desperate peril in which his friends stood not merely in Spain, but also in France and other lands. He couldn't expect to compete with the tobacco king of the Iberian Peninsula, but if he owned a real Goya he might be able to purchase a Budd-Erling P7—or even two of them, if Robbie would give him cost price—and those might turn the tide in the fight that was so near !

Lanny said : " This is an old painting, and most of them are junk."

" *De ningún valor,*" translated Raoul with dignity.

" I have been told that this is a very valuable painting," insisted Don Pedro.

" It is a gamble," declared Lanny ; and his friend translated, still more politely : " *Él es una duda* "—an uncertainty.

"How much will you pay for it?" asked the master.

"You will have to set the price." And this became, in translation: "I should prefer that your esteemed self should state what you consider the picture to be worth."

However politely phrased, that was a soul-torturing demand. There was a long silence, during which Lanny observed a spittle of greed drooling from the lips of the great-great-grandson of a Comendador. His clenched hands behaved as if he were holding a live mouse inside each one. He caught his breath several times, but could not bring out a sound, and finally it was a new voice which broke the suspense. "Ten thousand pesetas," said the gypsy-looking woman in the shadows.

Lanny waited; he wasn't negotiating with her. She repeated the demand, more insistently, and only then did Don Pedro bring out the words: "Ten thousand pesetas."

Lanny was sure that if he accepted the offer at once it would be regretted and perhaps withdrawn. The only respectable way was to bargain closely, fight hard, and yield only to superior moral force. He said to Raoul: "I am afraid the *Señor* has a very exaggerated idea as to the amount of money which Americans possess. Explain to him, please."

So Raoul made a speech, of which his friend could understand perhaps half. This was a far from wealthy gentleman, who had to earn what he spent; he was travelling here on behalf of others: in short, a hard-luck story, depressing to all hearers.

"How much will the *Señor americano* pay?" inquired Don Pedro; and Lanny replied that six thousand pesetas would be a fabulous amount for an old dusty portrait of a man a hundred years buried—and the picture did not even have a frame! "Where is the frame?" asked the visitor, and made a great deal of it, and learned that his guess was correct—it had been sold to the *alcalde* of the town of Calatayud, who had had a photograph of his deceased mother greatly enlarged and beautifully tinted. But perhaps the frame could be bought back if the *Señor americano* especially required it.

They bargained back and forth; and Raoul, who had never before taken part in the purchase of a painting, must have been surprised by his friend's competence in this ancient art. Lanny even went so far as the door, threatening to depart, with Raoul following—this when the gypsy lady, who had taken over the conversation, insisted upon standing firm at nine thousand pesetas. But before he had started down the rickety steps, she said: "*Bueno!* Eight thousand!" and it was a deal.

VIII

The next problem became the paying of the money. Lanny had about three thousand in cash ; the rest he would have to get from a bank, either in Calatayud or Saragossa, he wasn't sure. But who was to hold the picture in the meantime ? A delicate matter, which Raoul had to handle with extreme care in the polite Spanish language. Don Pedro and his lady friend wanted to see the three thousand at once ; but they would hardly be willing for the American stranger to carry the painting away until the full sum had been paid. Raoul said this, and waited an interval to let Don Pedro say that he wouldn't mind ; but he didn't say it. Instead he proposed that the travellers should spend the night here ; but Lanny hastened to say that he had made an engagement in town which he must keep.

So finally it was decided that they would all four go down to town ; Lanny and Raoul would shift their bags so as to make room for the Señorita Rosa—now properly introduced—in the back seat of the car. The painting, rolled up, would lie safely on top of the front and rear seats, lengthwise with the car, extending between the shoulders of the driver and his friend. Don Pedro would bestride his dependable *mulo*.

Before setting out on this journey, both parties desired to nail down the deal. Raoul brought in the typewriter and a bag from the car, got out some paper and carbon paper, and proceeded to type in the formal Spanish language a bill of sale for a portrait of the Comendador Humfredo Fernando Bustamente y Bastida at the price of eight thousand pesetas. "The receipt of three thousand is acknowledged by the signing of this document, and the balance shall be paid within three days in the city of Calatayud ; or if, by reason of civil difficulty interfering with the transmission of money from France, the sum cannot be obtained within that time, the picture shall be left in escrow with the alcalde of Calatayud for a period of not more than thirty days during which the final payment must be made." Lanny demanded this arrangement because of news which he had heard while driving, to the effect that the government was contemplating steps against certain of the Rightist leaders in Madrid.

A copy of this document was placed in the hands of Don Pedro so that he might study it. Could he read ? Lanny guessed not, but waited patiently so that he might pretend to. After a proper time

he pronounced the agreement satisfactory, and took Lanny's fountain-pen and with painful slowness wrote his name on the copy and the carbon. Lanny also signed, and Raoul as a witness, whereupon Lanny produced his note-case and counted out the money which had been intended to take him and his secretary from Madrid to the Spanish border. It was equal to about four hundred and twenty dollars, but to this starving household it seemed as many thousands; the long fingers of Don Pedro shook as he counted them, and Rosa hovered over him in a sort of fever of greed. She was going along so as to see that her master did not part with the painting until he had got the rest of the cash, and then to see that nobody but herself got any of it.

So to the painting. There appeared to be not a scrap of rope or string on the place, and Lanny had to take some of the cord with which the linens had been tied. He and Raoul rolled the canvas, not too tightly, and bound it near each end and the middle. They bore it reverently to the car, and laid a towel over the top of each seat to protect the upholstery. The Señorita got into her place, and Don Pedro led the way on that boney mule, which meanwhile had had a rest and presumably some feed. Riding out there before the bright headlights, with his threadbare black velvet knickerbockers and rumpled stockings, the abnormally tall and lean Spaniard presented a truly quixotic appearance; all he needed was a lance and some windmills, and you would have known that another motion-picture company was on location in the homeland of Cervantes.

IX

It was late when they drove into the thousand-year-old town of Calatayud, but the Hotel Forños opened its doors for them. Lanny had invited the couple to be his guests, and he saw them provided with a suite with connecting rooms, so that he would not be taking too much for granted. They had agreed after some hesitation that the painting should be left locked in the car in the hotel garage.

Alone in his room with his friend, Lanny said: "I am paying over a thousand dollars for this painting, and I am doing it on a gamble that the authorities at the border, or wherever they may look into this car, will not consider it as a part of the national art treasure."

"Is it really?" inquired Raoul.

Lanny employed a Spanish phrase which he had just learned:

"*Él es una duda*"—it is an uncertainty. "I shall have to have it cleaned, and then have Zoltan examine it. I am taking a gamble. What I want to be sure of is that it is not inconsistent with your revolutionary conscience to smuggle a painting out of Spain. What is in my mind is that if it should turn out to be valuable and I make a profit on it, I will use it for the cause. It seems to me the painting wasn't doing any good in that tumbledown mansion in the hills, and the profits would not do much good to Don Pedro if he got them."

"I agree with all that," said Raoul. "You do not have to worry about my revolutionary conscience; but you may have to worry a lot about getting the painting out."

In the morning the Comendador was still in the car, so Don Quixote and his Dulcinea felt less uneasy, and the four *compañeros* breakfasted, then repaired to the banking-house of Gaspar y Hijo, in the business part of this clay-built town.

The proprietor, stoutish, with yellow jowls and a grey moustache, evinced alarm when the *americano rico* proceeded to unfold his wild idea. Ten thousand pesetas—and by telephone! To be sure, the banker had been to the cinema, and learned how *americanos ricos* wave their hands and cause money to fall from the skies. But ten thousand pesetas! And this very morning! The banker had never heard of the bank in Cannes where Lanny kept his wealth. To be sure, it was listed in a volume which the firm possessed—but then, how could anyone be sure what had happened since that volume was printed? Ten thousand pesetas! *Perdone Vd., Señor!*

Lanny asked the name of the bank with which Señor Gaspar did business in Madrid and whether he felt certain that this bank was still solvent. Lanny proposed to telephone to his Cannes bankers, using the Señor's facilities and paying for them—he laid a hundred-peseta note upon the desk and the permission was granted. Lanny's bankers were used to his habit of transferring large sums to various parts of the world, and would not be startled by any order. He identified himself by a code sentence, and instructed them to telegraph the sum of ten thousand pesetas, something more than thirty thousand francs, to the Madrid bank, with instructions to pay it to the account of the firm of Gaspar y Hijo of Calatayud, Spain. The Madrid bank was to telephone the Gaspar firm immediately upon receipt of the telegram, the cost of the message to be charged against the transaction. Just as simple as that; and Señor Gaspar wiped the perspiration from his forehead, remarking that it was a hot morning.

Lanny perceived that his new friends wished to keep him under observation, lest he should step into his car and disappear with the painting ; so he permitted them to escort him and Raoul to view the Church of Santa María. He inspected a portal of the sixteenth century, and he and Raoul climbed into a tall octagonal tower to look at the view ; Don Pedro pleaded ill-health and waited with his lady, feeling sure that the *americano* couldn't fly. Later they went back to the hotel for dinner, at twenty pesetas for the four—never in all his days had the great-great-grandson of a Comendador heard or dreamed of such luxury. Food enough to have lasted a man for two days—and Lanny saw the proud hidalgo slipping lumps of sugar into the pocket of his black velvet suit.

The money had not yet come, so they looked at more churches and learned about Mudéjar towers, built by Moors after this land had been reconquered from that race. Telephoning again to the banker, Lanny learned that the message had just arrived, so the four of them repaired to the bank, where Lanny received his ten thousand pesetas, less the costs of the transaction. He counted out five thousand to the trembling scarecrow and obtained his receipt in full, taking the precaution to have the signature of Señor Gaspar as witness to the proceedings. They all bowed to the banker, who assured them that it had been *honradísimo de haberles conocido*. Incidentally he tried, but without success, to persuade Don Pedro and his Rosa to leave the money in his care.

Lanny saw his guests safely delivered to the stable where rested the long-suffering creature which was going to carry the pair of them back into those barren brown hills—and at once, before Don Pedro was lured into any gambling-house or bank ! Lanny paid his hotel bill, distributed his *propinas*, saw his bags safely stowed, and set out upon the highway to Saragossa in the company of his secretary and the Comendador of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

X

They tuned their radio to the government station of Madrid. It was Friday, and they learned that in Melilla, capital of Spanish Morocco, the Foreign Legion, marching, had been booed by Socialists from their headquarters ; the troops had broken ranks, charged the building, and thrown the Socialists out of their own windows. Then came a portentous announcement : the people of Madrid were urged to stand by, to stay tuned to this station ; grave events were in progress, and the government would soon have a statement to make.

Stay tuned to this station! There followed music, rather tantalizing under the circumstances.

Raoul, who had the radio in front of him, turned to the Seville station, over which he heard alarming news: General Francisco Franco had flown from the Canary Islands to Melilla and had taken command of twenty thousand troops, Foreign Legion and Moors. The station which gave this news was in the hands of the rebels, who were calling themselves *Nacionalistas* and claimed to speak in the name of the Spanish people. Seville and Cadiz were already in their hands, they said, and in a few minutes came the statement that Madrid had surrendered to the new movement.

Lanny and Raoul sat speechless while this radio announcer claimed one triumph after another for the forces of General Franco, whom he called El Caudillo, the equivalent of Il Duce and Der Führer. Lanny could understand most of what was said; once in a while he would cry out a question, and Raoul would answer a few words. "It's all Fascist lies!" exclaimed the latter. "We don't have to believe a word of it."

"Turn back to Madrid," Lanny suggested. Raoul dialled, and they heard the government man saying that wild rumours were being circulated; the people must remain quiet. It was wholly false that General Franco had turned against the government. General Franco was a loyal soldier and patriot, worthy of all trust. "Oh, my God!" exclaimed the two of them.

They turned once more to the rebel station, and heard the tail end of a proclamation by General Franco, announcing himself as the defender of Spanish liberties and calling on the troops everywhere to rise and overthrow the government of Red criminals who had been betraying the Spanish nation. The radio announced new triumphs. Barcelona was in the hands of the Nationalist forces; Burgos in the north had surrendered to them. Town after town was listed in which the garrisons had joined the new movement—and among them was Saragossa, to which the travellers were now proceeding!

Turning back to the government station at Madrid, they learned that the Cabinet had resigned, and a new one formed, headed by a professor of the University of Madrid. Then once more the injunction: "Stay tuned to this station!"—followed by the latest motion-picture song hit: "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?" Both Lanny and Raoul were very much afraid indeed. Obviously the long-prepared stroke had come, and apparently the insurgents were having their own way; the government forces gave the impression of being in utter confusion.

"This can be pretty serious for us, Raoul," said his friend. "This whole province may be in the hands of the Fascists by now."

"Well, we haven't done anything against them, have we?"

"No, but they may commandeer our car. They do that all the time in war; and we'd have one hell of a time getting back to France. We waited a couple of days too long."

XI

Plenty of subject for conversation between two camouflaged Pinks, while Radio Madrid was rendering selections of American jazz recordings! Lanny took his Budd automatic and shoved it down behind the front seat. It was all right for resisting a bandit, but not for fighting an army. He bethought himself of a carbon copy of the letter to Longuet which he had been so indiscreet as to make, and he had Raoul open one of his bags, tear the letter into very small fragments, and abandon them to the wind which blew over the bare plains of Aragon. He discussed with his friend the possibility of detouring to avoid the city of Saragossa; but unfortunately the roads of Spain didn't seem to be built for detours. When you got off the *camino real* you were likely to find yourself in a maze of sheep-tracks. If there was any road branching off, it led to some other town, and any town was just as likely to be in the hands of the rebels.

Troops which took possession of a town would be apt to block the roads and to question those entering and those departing. Lanny set his companion to studying the Michelin maps with the idea that it might be possible to approach Saragossa by some inconspicuous street. All troops, whether Whites or Reds, were equally to be avoided; indeed, from the point of view of the travellers, Reds were the more dangerous, because they would probably be in greater need of cars. Neither Lanny nor Raoul would have any way of establishing themselves as "comrades," and it would be highly dangerous to try, for then they would be taking part in a civil war, the most confused and cruel of all kinds. Who could be sure what any group really was? Who could guess how they might change sides—privates shooting their officers, or being captured and going over to their opponents?

No, argued Lanny, two tourists, one of them a privileged American, must remain what they were and claim the immunity granted to strangers. Raoul must be a secretary, thus adding to the

importance of his employer. The Comendador was a guarantee of neutrality ; it wasn't likely that either Whites or Reds would concern themselves with art in such a crisis. Lanny said : " He may be worth more than anything else, so if they take our car let's hang on to him." They would go walking down the highway, carrying a big roll of canvas on their shoulders—a spectacle hardly less fantastic than Don Pedro on his *mulo*. If it came to real war, buses and railway trains might be stopped as well as private cars ; petrol might be unobtainable, and they might have to walk it all the way to France with the Comendador of the Order of the Golden Fleece ! Or perhaps if they could get to the coast, they could get a boat and row him !

XII

Radio Madrid appeared to be recovering its self-possession. A new announcer admitted that an uprising against the government was in process of being put down ; also that General Francisco Franco might actually be the author of the manifestoes being issued in his name. But the public was warned to beware of the station which was calling itself Radio Seville—it wasn't really Seville, but Ceuta, on the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar, broadcasting on the wavelength of Seville and masquerading as that station ! Radio Ceuta had proclaimed the surrender of Madrid, but this was nonsense ; Madrid was calm, its people assured of the preservation of order. The homes and offices of the Rightist conspirators were now being raided.

Rolling down through the gorges of the Jalon River, Lanny and Raoul listened to a civil war of the air. Raoul would translate the words and attempt to guess the colour, Red or White. With a little practice you could distinguish. Radio Barcelona reported that copies of a monarchist manifesto had been discovered and confiscated ; an infantry regiment in the suburb of Miralbes had revolted and was being put down. All civilians of the Frente Popular were rushing to join the Loyalist troops. That station was undoubtedly in the hands of the semi-autonomous government of Catalonia, far to the left of the Madrid government.

Then Radio Burgos, proclaiming that the entire north had gone over to the Nationalist movement ; Santander, San Sebastian, the Asturias, all patriotic, all rushing to the standard of freedom and General Mola. Raoul said : " That's Fascist propaganda, you may be sure. The Asturias are full of coal and iron mines, and the Fascists slaughtered the miners wholesale after the strike a couple

of years ago ; but they didn't kill them all, because you can't work mines without labour—and the miners are Red to the last man."

The Jalon River empties into the brown and placid Ebro, and not far down the latter they came into sight of the two cathedrals of Saragossa. There was a special reason for one of them : the Virgin had appeared to St. James the Greater, standing upon a marble pillar and commanding him to build a church in her honour ; a whole cathedral had been built over and around that holy pillar, with a rather squat black wooden image of the Virgin on top of it, and crowds of the faithful came from all over Spain to ask her intercession. The image was kept dressed in gorgeous jewelled raiment which was changed frequently, and during the ceremony of investiture the priests kept their eyes averted, that they might not be blinded by the splendour of the heavenly countenance. Well-nigh incredible were the miracles wrought by kissing this holy pillar ; the Very Eminent Cardinal Retz once saw a man with a wooden leg rub the leg with oil from the Virgin's lamp, and the leg at once turned to flesh and the man leaped up and danced with joy by way of thanks to the Blessed One. Raoul said that this was the sort of thing for which the ultra-pious General Franco was going to war ; using Moorish barbarians to keep the Holy Virgin on her *Santa pilar* !

XIII

They had heard Saragossa reported as in the hands of both Whites and Reds ; so now they were not wishing to view any Mudéjar towers, alabaster altar-pieces, carved choir stalls, retables, or holy marble pillars. They kept a close watch ahead, and as they neared the city limits observed a group of men in the road with what they took to be a machine-gun. A lane turned off to the south, away from the river, and Lanny swung into it, driving as fast as he dared ; he began groping his way through the outskirts of the town, partly a slum district and partly orchards. The city lay to their left—large white buildings with many-coloured tiled roofs and octagonal towers gleaming in the light of a setting sun. They knew that one of the buildings was the military barracks—a place where they especially didn't want to be. There were tall chimneys with smoke pouring forth, for Saragossa had become an industrial town, with workers jammed into the usual five-storey tenements. Lanny observed whole streets of these, with long curtains hanging from the tops of windows and extending over the balconies to keep out the blazing sun.

They crossed the highway going south from the town, and there was a filling-station. They stopped to get *la gasolina*—at about one peseta per litre, a little more than a quart. Raoul took the occasion to ask the attendant what had been happening, but the man did not exactly know; he had heard shooting in the direction of the centre of the town, but no cars had come out since then—an alarming statement from the point of view of the travellers.

They were supposed to cross the Ebro by the Bridge of Our Lady of the Pillar, but that would take them through the centre of the town; so they kept on down the river, sneaking through obscure streets. But all their strategy was in vain, for when they came out to the highway they saw troops blocking it, and when they tried to duck back into a side lane, a car came roaring up behind them with a command to halt. The muzzles of guns pointing at them left no choice, so they halted.

"*Viajero americano*," said Raoul, taking charge of the situation at once; then with proper Spanish courtesy: "Kindly do not point the guns into our faces."

The request was complied with. The officer in charge was a smooth-faced boy, apparently some sort of cadet; he had such elegant manners that Lanny judged him a member of the fashionable classes and therefore almost certainly a White. He looked the tourists over carefully and asked: "Where are you bound, Señores?"

"We are returning from Madrid to France," replied Raoul.

"What is that thing you have there?"

"It is an oil painting we have purchased."

"Rolled up like carpet?"

"It is on canvas, and has no frame. We could not have got it into the car otherwise. Señor Budd is an art expert, and I am his secretary."

"What were you doing on that street that you came from?"

"The man where we bought *la gasolina* said there had been shooting in the town, and naturally we were trying to avoid it."

"Let me see your passports."

That was to be expected, and they both produced them. Lanny said nothing, but did his best to look impressive. The handsome young cadet studied the documents, then said: "We have orders to stop all persons on the route towards Lérida. It is really dangerous, Señores, for the Reds are holding it, and they are nothing better than *bandidos*."

"Tell him we are willing to take a chance," replied Lanny. But

before the secretary could translate this the young officer went on : " And besides, it may be necessary for us to commandeer your car."

" Oh, but you cannot take the car of visitors ! " protested Raoul. " This is one of the most respected of American art connoisseurs and a person of great importance."

" It would not be for long. Cars are needed to transport our troops to places where the Reds have managed to get guns and are resisting the authority of our Nationalist government. It will be a slight inconvenience, and you will be compensated."

" But, *Señor Capitán* "—Raoul thought it could do no harm to promote the youngster—" this American gentleman is not thinking about money—he would gladly donate it to your cause. But he has urgent business in France ; he has arranged for the sale of a number of paintings which will bring large sums of money to your Nationalists—some of your most prominent people are his friends and patrons. He has this large canvas which it is impossible to transport without his car ; also we have much luggage, as you can see. It would be most improper for us to be delayed and it would be a great discourtesy to the American nation—this gentleman is a friend of the President Roosevelt and of the Ambassador, Señor Bowers." Raoul continued to pile it on, speaking fast, as they do in Spanish, and hoping to overwhelm the inexperienced youth.

" It will be necessary to consult my superior," said the youth with dignity ; and then to the American : " Will you be so kind as to turn your car and drive to the place where you see the troops stationed in the road ? I will follow—and please do not attempt to drive away, because I have orders to fire and I should regret to do it."

XIV

It was a squad of the Spanish Army which had barricaded the road, leaving just room for a car to get through. They had a machine-gun mounted on a tripod, and Lanny with professional eye noted that it was a Bofors, from Sweden. The officer who commanded wasn't so well bred as the younger, and declared gruffly that tourists who had chosen a time like this to wander about Spain did so at their own peril. Lanny was about to absolve the officer of responsibility, when he was interrupted by a shout from one of the soldiers, pointing down the road and somewhat into the air. There was a plane, flying low, some distance away, but the sound seemed to be

widening and spreading out all at once—the plane was approaching at high speed.

Friend or foe? There was hardly time to ask one's self the question. But apparently the soldiers knew that a friend doesn't dive down upon you and scare the wits out of you in time of war. To do such a thing would be to invite shots—but not from this contingent! Officers and men acted as one, leaping for the shelter of the building which they had taken for their headquarters.

As for the travellers, there wasn't time for them to move; they were in the car and stayed. The storm swept on and over them; there was a patter of sounds and spurts of dust from the road, all in a small fraction of a second, and then the plane was gone. It took more time for Lanny even to realize that it had been machine-gun fire. His first thought was: "Am I hit?" and then: "Has Raoul been hit?" He looked, and saw Raoul looking at him. They had both been hit by surprise, but apparently by nothing else; not even fear, because the episode had been over so quickly.

Another idea crossed Lanny's mind. The soldiers were gone. He didn't stop to do any more thinking. One foot pressed the pedal that threw the clutch into neutral and the other foot pressed the starter. The engine started, and Lanny shifted his right foot to the accelerator and it began to roar; he grabbed the gear lever, and threw the clutch into first, lifted his left foot from the pedal, and away leaped the car through the opening in the barricade. Another change and they were in top, whirling down the road.

"Watch behind!" Lanny exclaimed, for he didn't dare to take his eyes off the road even for a glimpse into his mirror. "Anybody following?"

"Not yet," said Raoul, and they swung into a curve which took them out of sight of the soldiers.

Lanny had a fast car, but he didn't know this road and so didn't dare use his speed. He decided right away that if he saw them coming after him he would stop, for he didn't want them to shoot—the matter wasn't that serious. Suddenly he jammed on his brakes, for he saw a lane going off to the left, towards the river. When he got to it he was going slowly, so as not to leave any skid marks; he turned and drove down a slow incline to the banks of the brown Ebro, overhung with willows. There was a flat place there, where cattle were watered, and also, apparently, vehicles had been taken on to some sort of flat boat, a ferry; there was room for turning, and Lanny ran his car into the space, completely out of sight from the highway. "If they find us, all right!" he said.

XV

The pair sat for a long while, talking low and chuckling now and then ; they had had an adventure, just enough to be fun, and they were proud of their cleverness, which had perhaps saved their car from the hated Fascists. Twilight was falling, and Lanny said : " Let's stay right here, because if they chase us they may go a long way and then come back."

" When they come back," suggested Raoul, " they may be coming slowly, looking to see if we turned off." That wasn't so good !

The Spaniard happened to glance over the top of the thick roll of canvas which lay between him and Lanny, its top just about at the level of his eyes. He saw something there, and put his fingers to it, and exclaimed : " Good God, Lanny ! Look ! "

The other put his hand up, and found a neat round hole through the canvas, just about the size through which he could poke his little finger. He had seen thousands of them, just that size and shape, ever since his childhood. " Machine-gun bullets," he said. " Right between us ! "

He ran his hand back over the surface of the canvas, as far as he could reach. " Here's another ! What beautiful aiming ! "

He got out of the car, opened the rear door, and passed his hand over the other end of the roll. " Here's a third ! " he said. " If I knew what make of machine-gun it was, I could calculate the speed of the plane ; or if I knew the speed of the plane, I could tell you the make of the machine-gun."

Raoul was glad of the twilight, so that his friend couldn't see how scared he was—even now, when the plane might be a hundred miles away ! Lanny's way was the right way to take such things, of course ; with just a few moments Raoul would get himself together and think of some joke, too !

The bullets had come straight down through the roof of the car, and there were three neat round holes overhead. One of the missiles had penetrated the bundles of linen—alas, for those lovely tablecloths and napkins ! The punctures in the roof would make a lot of trouble in case of rain, so Lanny got out some tyre-tape and climbed up and patched them carefully while the roof was dry. " Poor old Comendador ! " he exclaimed. " If only it were possible to fix his twelve wounds so easily ! "

" How do you figure twelve ? " asked the other.

"We rolled the canvas twice, and that means four punctures for each bullet."

"Will it mean the picture is ruined entirely?"

"They do wonderful jobs of repairing; but of course I'll have to tell the buyer, and it will probably knock off half the price." He thought for a moment and added: "That is, unless somebody wants a souvenir of the very newest European war."

21

Hazard of the Die

I

SATURDAY, the eighteenth of July, the second day of the Spanish Civil War, and two travellers ensconced in the Palace Hotel in the ancient town of Lérida sat over orange juice and coffee, eggs and rolls, discussing a decision which might affect the whole future of their lives. At the moment they had every comfort; breakfast served in their rooms and all Spain at their command. But how long would this last? The garrison housed in the Castillo upon the hill had not yet moved. When it did, would it be to the Right or Left? No one in the hotel could guess—or, at any rate, they wouldn't tell strangers. At any moment the garrison might receive orders from Madrid—say, to move out and put down the rebels at Saragossa; then it would depend upon what the officers thought, or what the troops thought—they might begin shooting one another, as in other cities. In any case they would be wanting cars, and an especially fine one standing in a hotel garage would be an object of acute interest.

All right then; finish your breakfast in a hurry and get out of town. But in what direction? North-eastwards ran a road up the valley of the Segre River and into the Pyrenees; a beautiful trip, crossing into France at Puigcerdá—Raoul knew it well, having made his escape by that route in his youth. That was the route of speed and safety, for the towns on the way were small, the troops would be few, and the rebels not especially active in this province. The other road ran east to Barcelona, a hundred and twenty miles; and that way lay adventure, that way history was being decided, perhaps at this very hour. Lanny Budd, a mature man with important

affairs on his hands, really had no right to be thinking about such things ; but he was, and he said : " Let's hear the news."

They paid their bill, got into the car, and crossed the Río Segre by a bridge constructed on ancient Roman foundations—so well had that practical people done their work. They drove slowly, while Raoul twirled the dials, getting both sides of the fast-spreading conflict. No doubt now that there was real fighting, and it was touch and go in many places ; you could believe whichever side made you happy. The rebels apparently held Cádiz and Málaga. General Queipo de Llano had seized Seville for them, but fighting was going on. The Moors were at La Línea, the border town between Spain and Gibraltar. In Madrid and Barcelona the government was arming the workers.

One important item : both these great cities contended that their military aviation had remained loyal. " That is Major de Cisneros, Constanca's husband ! " exclaimed Raoul. Planes had been sent to bomb Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco, so announced Radio Madrid. Radio Barcelona proudly told how the chief of their aviation force had bombed the rebel garrisons in Saragossa and Huesca, and informed these traitors that they would get more of the same sort day after day. The announcer didn't know and therefore couldn't mention that the attacking plane had scored three direct hits upon a Comendador of the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece, dead more than a hundred years !

Some of what you heard was news, but more of it was propaganda : denunciations of the enemy, incitement to hatred and calls to action against him. Raoul sat with hands clenched tightly and that peculiar quivering of the nostrils which indicated intense excitement in him. The union labour radio in Madrid read an editorial appearing in *El Socialista*, calling upon all workers to enlist in the defence of the government and to begin strikes in industries wherever the rebels got control. " Lanny, this is the real thing ! " exclaimed the school director. " This will decide the future of Spain for our lifetimes."

" That and perhaps longer," was the reply.

II

A little more than a mile outside Llérida they came to the fork in the road, where they had to decide their own future. Puigcerdá and Sallés, or Barcelona and nobody could guess what ! The car drew up by the side of the road until they should have made up their minds.

"Lanny," said Raoul, "do you suppose you could get to France by yourself?"

"Why, yes," he replied, surprised. "You are thinking of staying?"

"I should feel that I was running away from duty if I went out now."

"You mean to fight?"

"I am a Spaniard, and I ought to put myself at the service of the government and do whatever they tell me. I don't know that I'd be much good as a soldier, but I have an education and I could help the workers to understand what this crisis means to them."

"What would we do about the school, Raoul?"

"You'd find someone to carry it on. Of course it may be that this will all be over in a few days; but I ought to stay until I make sure."

"And your wife?"

"She will want to join me if I stay. She has learned some Spanish and could serve as a nurse. All sorts of people will be coming from France to help."

"All right," said Lanny; "if that's the right thing for you, I've no complaint."

"I could accompany you to the border——"

"No, that would be foolish. I'll be there by to-night, if I decide to go. Do you think I ought to stay and help, too?"

"Would you be willing?" It was Raoul's turn to be surprised.

"I've thought about it. I could make a pretty good sharp-shooter, you know."

"But could you stand the hard life?"

"Who knows what he can stand until he has to?"

They talked it over from various angles, and Raoul's verdict was: "You could do a hundred times as much outside, Lanny. Go and see Longuet and tell him the story. See Blum and try to persuade him to send us help. Tell Rick about it and let him write some articles. Maybe you can get your father to sell us a few of his planes. No, we have thousands of fellows who can learn to hit a target, but nobody can do the special things that you can."

That was always the way in Lanny's life. Every time he had a heroic impulse somebody told him to go and attend a tea-party, or have lunch with a statesman, or tell a story to a journalist! Always things which had to be done in the Crillon or the Adlon or the Dorchester, in somebody's town house or country mansion, or travelling de luxe by steamer or motor-car. Never anything that involved discomfort or danger—unless, of course, it happened, purely by

accident, that the chief of the Air Force of the semi-autonomous government of Catalonia flew over him and sent three bullets through the top of his car, one of them within an inch of his shoulder !

"Where would you enlist, Raoul ?" asked the victim of too good fortune. His friend replied that he would go to Barcelona ; he couldn't very well get back to Madrid, with the towns in between in the hands of the rebels. "All right," said Lanny. "It's Barcelona for both of us,"—and he started the car down the right-hand fork of the road.

"You're taking a risk," warned Raoul. "You know, even the government may take your car, if the need happens to be great enough."

"If it's that great, I'll give it to them."

"Then how will you get home ?"

"I suppose trains will still be running to the border ; and once I get into France, there'll be cars enough for sale."

Raoul got a new vision of what it meant to belong to the privileged classes. He knew this very fine car must have cost nearly a hundred thousand francs ; yet Lanny proposed to toss it away as if it had been an old coat to a beggar. "And what about the Comendador ?"

"Oh, well," smiled Lanny, "seeing that he's badly wounded, I suppose he can expect special treatment. I'll wrap him up, and maybe they'll let me ride with him in the luggage-van !"

III

It was no simple matter crossing the ancient principality of Cataluña in time of civil war. They were stopped a dozen times before they reached their destination ; always by partisans of the government, suspicious of anybody in an expensive car, and taking no chances of letting enemy intriguers or spies into their territory. More than once the patrols insisted upon lifting the big roll of canvas, to make certain that it didn't contain a machine-gun or other lethal weapon. They didn't always understand Raoul's polished Castilian, for they spoke the harsh Catalan ; it was Lanny who recognized some of the words, for their language resembles Provençal. The older peasants wore the *birretina*, a long cap like a stocking, of bright-red colour which now had acquired a new significance. On these windswept hills grew cork trees and olives, and wherever there was a sheltered spot men toiled from dawn to dark to "make bread out of stones," as they phrased it.

Wherever there were industries, the workers had taken charge of the highways, protecting their own government without asking anybody's permission. Among these were always some who spoke Spanish, and when they learned that the travellers had left Madrid only two days ago, they wanted to know about conditions in the capital and along the road. When Raoul had made sure that the government forces were in control all the way to Barcelona, he told about their adventure in Saragossa and exhibited the wounds of the Comendador in proof. When the tannery workers guarding the road into Igualada discovered that the strangers had a radio on board, they clamoured for news, and Raoul dialed Barcelona for them. When they heard with their own ears the voice of their President, Companys, announcing that the Moors at La Linea were slaughtering hundreds of innocent people in cold blood, they resolved to march at once to the capital with such arms as they could collect. Some of them were puzzled to learn that while the *Señores ricos* could hear Barcelona they couldn't answer back; they solemnly commissioned the pair that when they got to Barcelona they were to inform El Presidente that reinforcements would be on the march.

Through a winding gorge the travellers descended to the valley of the River Llobregat, alongside the strange saw-toothed mountains known as Montserrat. Here is a famous monastery, built on the site of one of those ancient miracles which so frequently happened to wooden images of the Virgin; being carried through these wild and fantastic mountains, escaping from the Moors, this one had refused to go any farther, so here was a shrine, and great numbers of hermitages, also hotels and lodging-houses for hundreds of pilgrims who came every day to the place. The two visitors had no eyes and no thoughts for religious art or architecture in this crisis; they kept on the highway, watching for military barriers and sentries who might be disposed to shoot first and inquire afterwards.

Over the radio, the rebels admitted fighting in Seville, but asserted that they were gaining everywhere in the south, and that troopships were landing an army at Cádiz. General Mola was consolidating his forces in the north for an immediate march on Madrid. In short, the movement for "liberation" had succeeded, and General Franco warned that punishment would be meted out not merely to all who resisted but to all who tried to remain neutral. On the other hand Radio Madrid hailed an enlistment of the people's militia and called upon workers and peasants everywhere to organize and fight with whatever arms they could get. "The Frente Popular has now become an army," proclaimed the announcer. He declared

that the Navy was loyal to the government and that the cruiser *Cervantes* was bombarding Cádiz. The government held the Basque coast all the way to the French border ; so, once more : " Who's afraid of the big bad wolf ? "

IV

It would have been too bad to take this long journey, run all these risks, and then lose the car to the rebels at the last moment. They questioned people on the way and collected much information, the only trouble being that it was so full of contradictions. The rebels were all over the city of Barcelona. Did they have the Citadel ? It was rumoured so. And where were the barracks of the revolting regiments ? These, too, appeared to be in many places. It transpired that the nearer you got to a civil war, the less you knew about what was happening. Try the radio again ; but Barcelona broadcasting was mostly given up to denunciation of the enemies' crimes and calls for all able-bodied men to join the armed forces. Apparently the Catalan government didn't want the rest of the country to know that the rebels held any part of their capital.

Lanny and Raoul had been told that the rebels had seized the suburb of Peralbes, which is on the higher land to the west, near the Royal Golf Club and the Royal Palace. That seemed a likely neighbourhood for Fascists to be in, so the travellers considered making a detour and coming in by the Hipódromo, near the shore. But that would bring them past the Fortress of Montjuich, which seemed most likely to be in the enemies' hands. They decided to split the difference and enter by a main boulevard, the Calle de las Cortes Catalanas, which offered the advantage that they could see far ahead and if they came upon anything suspicious could dodge into a side street in a hurry.

Very soon they came to a barricade, with armed workers on guard and a red flag above it. That looked like home, and Raoul leaned out of the car window, waved his handkerchief, and called : " *Amigos !* " as they drove up to the wall of paving-stones. Raoul got out and introduced himself, mentioning that for many years he had been director of the Escuela de los Trabajadores del Midi. There was magic in that long word meaning labourers. So, in the Midi, as in Catalbna, the labourers had schools of their own ! Young fellows with trade-union cards lifted their clenched right fists to say that they were Communists, and others lifted both hands and clasped them over their heads to say that they were anarchists.

A heavy truck which made part of the barricade was pushed aside and the car ordered through. The olive-skinned volunteer soldiers, stripped to their undershirts in the hot sun and having bands tied about their foreheads to keep the sweat out of their eyes, made Lanny think he was back in the French Revolution, as portrayed by the painter David. Quite evidently these revolutionists couldn't get their minds adjusted to the idea of being addressed as "*compañeros*" by the occupants of such an aristocratic conveyance; they asked politely if they might lift the strange-looking large object and make sure that it contained nothing contraband. After they had done so, they shook hands with Raoul and told him that he was welcome; they plied him with questions as to what he had seen on the way, and in return told him what they knew. A rebel regiment was preparing to attack from the suburbs in the south-west, also an artillery regiment; another infantry regiment had been shut up in its barracks by its officers, and the men were trying to make up their minds what to do. Real fighting might break out at any moment.

V

Lanny had had a chance to observe Adolf Hitler's abortive Beerhall Putsch some thirteen years ago and had got the impression that a revolution consists of a great many men hurrying this way and that on the streets. Now he discovered the same thing in Barcelona. Small groups, in uniform or out, marched in one direction and others marched in the opposite direction. Cars and trucks rolled by, making a lot of noise at crossings, as if their owners were trying to express their state of excitement. There was much singing, in which passers-by joined, and this had a great effect upon Raoul, who had been teaching Socialist songs for years and now discovered that his voice had travelled a couple of hundred miles along this Mediterranean shore.

He and Lanny talked things over and decided that they had better stop at separate hotels, now that Raoul was enlisted for a war. It wouldn't be easy to convince rabid Marxists that an American play-boy was one of them; and anyhow, Lanny didn't want to convince them. The city was bound to be full of spies, Italian and German as well as Nationalist, to say nothing of American newspapermen who might find it a picturesque item that a son of Budd-Erling was lending moral and perhaps military support to the Red government of Catalonia. No, Lanny would go to the Ritz, as on the previous visit, and have his bags and his Comendador carried to his suite, his

car deposited safely in the garage; meanwhile Raoul would visit Marxist headquarters and see what the comrades had for him to do.

Having washed up and refreshed himself with a cold drink, Lanny decided to go for a stroll. The sun was going down, and the Ramblas now was crowded with people out to see the sights. Saturday made it a holiday, and war made it a double holiday; everybody wore a red ribbon or rosette, everybody was ready to sing at the least provocation, and nobody was afraid of the Franco wolf. Mostly they were workers, for the rich were afraid, and those who had not fled were hiding in their homes. None of the men wore hats, because that was a bourgeois custom; Lanny, who seldom wore a hat, was in fashion here. He knew how to start a conversation with any sort of man or woman, and by now had picked up quite a lot of Spanish, easy because he knew French and Italian. When he gave the password *americano*, the workers wanted to shake hands with him and talk about their wonderful baby, now five months old—the semi-autonomous government of Catalonia, headed by a small and very lively lawyer named Luis Companys.

It was in accord with Lanny's philosophy that masses of the people should turn out into the streets to celebrate their semi-autonomy. Nor was his pleasure utterly destroyed when he came back to the hotel and was told that men wearing red brassards had presented themselves at the garage and seized all the cars for the moving of troops. Not so many cars, it appeared, because most of the guests of this luxurious place had already made their escape. *Los oficiales*—so the badly scared hotel clerk called the requisitioners—had left a receipt, with the assurance that the owner would be paid a proper rental. Lanny, who from boyhood had been talking about the expropriation of the expropriators, was now getting a dose of it, and could imagine the smiles with which his semi-Fascist friends and relatives would greet the news of his troubles! Even the linen tablecloths and napkins were gone—but these from the leisure-class point of view were worthless because of the holes in them.

VI

Raoul came to the hotel at dinner-time to report. He had been disappointed because he had been unable to see the important officials he had asked for; each had had a score of persons claiming his time. Apparently everything was in the utmost confusion: people rushing this way and that, shouting orders when there was

no one to obey. That, too, was a phenomenon of revolutions; a hundred things to be done in the time ordinarily allotted to one. The city was expecting attack at any moment and the only thing to do was to grab a gun and fight; if you didn't have a gun, or a truck, or medical supplies, you would just have to go out and find some way to be useful, if you could.

Raoul had been comforted by an encounter with one of the school-teachers whom he had met on the previous visit to the city. An official in the teachers' syndicate, this man had mentioned that there was to be a meeting that evening at a corner of the Plaza de Cataluña, two or three blocks from Lanny's hotel; meetings were being got up all over the city, for the purpose of awakening and instructing the people, and it might be possible for Raoul to speak. The translator-secretary was so excited over this that he didn't want to eat any dinner, but went off by himself to think how he could help the people of Barcelona to realize the dreadful peril in which they stood.

An American of leisure strolled down to Barceloneta, the harbour district, and ate in that restaurant where he and Raoul had previously made some acquaintances. Now these husky toilers ate in a hurry, for they were loading trucks with supplies for the workers' army. Some were surly to a stranger who might be a spy; but Lanny could tell about the workers in France and what they would be thinking about the Franco insurrection—and all wanted to hear this. No trouble to make friends all over again, and when he mentioned the meeting at the Plaza de Cataluña a couple of sailors volunteered to stroll up with him and attend.

VII

It was still twilight when the meeting began. The orators stood on a truck, and a couple of thousand people crowded round it. All the tram-traffic in that large square had stopped, so there was nothing to interrupt the oratory. They sang *The Red Flag*, and then the head of the teachers' syndicate spoke, followed by several others. Lanny didn't see Raoul until the latter was introduced as a victim of the Primo de Rivera terror returned to the defence of his homeland.

Lanny had heard his friend speak on many occasions, but never one like the present. This stand of the workers against Fascist counter-revolution was the culmination of a Spanish peasant boy's whole life; it was the hour for which he had sought his education,

the proof that it had been worth while, for himself and for others. He told the listeners a little about his life, just to let them know that he was one of them and shared their bitter knowledge of hunger and oppression. He told how the light of understanding had dawned upon his soul, and how he had striven like Prometheus to bring that light to others. There were men who sought to snuff it out and plunge the people into darkness; men who thought of human beings as beasts of burden, as machines from which toil could be extracted; whose hearts held no love for their fellows, no hope for their future, no generous impulse to lift them up, but only a greedy desire to extract from their labour the utmost material gain.

Raoul had been introduced to speak for a few minutes, and he tried to stop, but the crowd would not let him. "*Más ! Más !*" they shouted. His flowery language was exactly what their ardent temperaments enjoyed; all the grand high-sounding words that he used—*libertad, igualdad, fraternidad, humanidad*—these were the dreams upon which they fed their souls. They shouted more loudly and their applause spurred the orator to greater fervour. Before he finished, they were completely in his hands, and if he had told them to go out and burn the Iglesia de Santa Ana which stood at one side of the square they would have done it. What he told them was to organize and defend their government to the last man and woman; to gather paving-stones and hurl them from the roof-tops upon the Fascist invaders; to fight them with pikes, kitchen knives, and clubs with nails in them; to take for their own the slogan of the French at Verdun: "*Passeront pas !*" *No pasarán ! They shall not pass !*"

The people crowded around the orator, clamouring, shaking his hand, patting him on the back, telling him how they agreed with him, promising to follow his advice. In short, it was a triumph, and the place of Raoul Palma in the Spanish workers' movement was assured. He was like the eaglet, which does not leave the nest and hop from limb to limb like other birds, but stands on the edge of the nest, exercising his wings day after day until he is fully ready. Then he launches himself, and it is his flight; from that moment he is an eagle.

The two sailors who had accompanied Lanny from the harbour urged that this silver-tongued orator should come to a meeting there and deliver the same speech. Somebody brought up a car and put Raoul into it; others crowded in, or clung to the running-boards, or in back, and off they went, horn tooting, to Barceloneta.

Lanny didn't follow; he knew the speech, because Raoul had been practising on him in fragments for the past three weeks.

Moreover, he reflected that it was a dangerous thing to go wandering about these streets at night. By day he could use his amiable smile and *savoir-faire*, but in the dark men are afraid, and shoot quickly in order to shoot first. Reflecting thus, he strolled one block along the Paseo de Gracia and two blocks along the Calle de las Cortes Catalanas, and so into his hotel. As he undressed he thought that he had seen about enough of history-making in Spain. Raoul would be busy from now on, and Lanny couldn't be with him without making himself known. After all, revolutions are pretty confused affairs—at any rate when viewed from the outside.

Lying in bed, he thought: "Well, I've lost the car. Some staff officer or union official will find it too convenient to give up. But it's in the third year, and Beauty will be glad."

That had always been the way in Lanny's home life, whether it had been his mother or his wife who was boss; his suits, his shirts, his ties, his cars were always getting out of fashion; everything that he got used to had to be replaced by something which the advertisers persuaded the ladies was more *à la mode*. To be driving a car the third season was really a social disgrace. So he would have a new model, and would lose only the trade-in price of the old one, not so much in the third year.

What make should he get? It was a problem that absorbed the rich and formed one of their principal topics of conversation. Every man had his favourite that he swore by. Lanny, who specialized in being open-minded, wasn't sure; but he could count upon the fact that whichever he chose, it would run and take him wherever he desired to go on this old Continent. With such agreeable meditations, he dropped into a peaceful slumber.

VIII

How long he slept he didn't know. He was awakened by a dull, heavy sound, many times repeated: *boom, boom, boom*. He opened his eyes and lay still, thinking: "That is firing!" He had heard a lot of it during the World War, in Paris and London when the Zeppelins came over, in Bienvenu when the subs. were hunting and being hunted. With others to advise him, he had become quite an expert in sounds. He thought: "That is artillery. The Fascists must be on the move."

He lay still, listening. There was nothing he could do about this battle. His car had gone to the Marxists and his Budd automatic and all the cartridges to Raoul. He tried to estimate whether the

sounds were coming nearer ; probably not, for artillery isn't moved while it is firing. He thought : " I might as well go to sleep again." But he found that he was too busy trying to guess who was firing and at what.

He looked at the window and saw a pale grey light. The attack was being made at dawn, a common military practice. There was traffic below his window, and he decided to get up and have a look. A string of buses, municipal transports, were coming into sight, loaded with men inside and on top ; they were singing the *Internationale*. " 'Tis the final conflict, let each stand in his place ! " In the dim half-light it sounded really moving ; men going to their death, and proclaiming the future which they might never see. " The international party shall be the human race ! "

Communists, Lanny thought. But no, they were all mixed up now, a united front at last, singing one another's songs : Communists, Socialists, anarchists, syndicalists, democrats, republicans, liberals, going out to fight oppression and exploitation under whatever label. It was the thing Lanny had been hoping for since first he had begun to understand. Now he felt himself exalted, and pledged his faith anew.

But not for long, of course. Great moments do not last in a confused and helter-skelter world. The idealist dreams how things ought to go, but they don't—there being no perfect human creatures or groups of them. Presently Lanny saw a red glow over the rooftops and then fire-engines rushing towards it. He realized that the fire was near, and drawing a mental map of the neighbourhood he decided it was the Iglesia de Santa Ana which he had seen looming in the dark sky as a background to Raoul's speech. Had somebody decided to burn it, even without such advice from the orator ? Various persons had decided to burn churches and church buildings in Spain, as a means of putting an end to the use of religion in support of political reaction and industrial slavery. Lanny was sorry, because to him these old churches were sanctuaries of art and of such culture as had existed in their day. What he wanted to burn was not old churches but old customs and social arrangements.

IX

The inveterate sight-seer thought he would go and see some of this. He dressed and went down into the lobby, where he found the few remaining guests, some of them not having stopped even to dress. What was happening ? The porter had been outside and

advised strongly against their going, because somebody had fired a shot at him; it had hit the wall and made a fearful pinging noise behind his head. The young fellows were going crazy and didn't know what they were doing. The man said this in Spanish, then in English, then in French. His job required that he be able to say a few things in all three languages; his frightened voice and hands supplied colour and conviction. Lanny decided to return to his room, where he had a good and safe view.

He watched the dawn come up like thunder over Barcelona and its blue "Midland Sea"; quite literally thunder, for there was now a heavy battle in the south-western suburbs of the city. Being a "star boarder" of this hotel, he asked and received a radio in his room, and when the other guests heard about it, they sought his hospitality. Thus he had agreeable company most of the morning: ladies and gentlemen from several parts of the world, all of whom might have been in the drawing-room at *Bienvenu* and who said just what they would have said there.

The Barcelona radio gave items of news every few minutes. Rebel regiments were advancing on the city, including the artillery regiment. The government forces, made up of Civil Guards, police, and the Marxist militia, were resisting firmly. Men and women capable of fighting were urged to hasten to the front. Civilians were advised to stay in their homes. The only traffic permitted on the streets was military cars, trucks carrying supplies to the fighters, and cars of doctors and nurses. The revolt would soon be crushed and order restored.

Then news from outside. The rebels were being put down in Valencia, Cádiz, and Seville; in the north the Asturian miners were marching to the aid of Madrid with sticks of dynamite in their belts instead of cartridges. After such announcements, the radio would shift to some old American record, *Chu-Chin-Chow*, or *Rose-Marie*, or other light opera tune. The ladies and gentlemen would begin saying how terrible everything was, and would they all be murdered by the Marxists, and how on earth were they to get out? Lanny couldn't say anything comforting, for he knew that civil wars are not polite; he knew, what these privileged people had never troubled to learn, the age-old wrongs which had set the fires of hatred to blazing in the hearts of wage-slaves.

Shortly before noon the Red avalanche descended upon the guests of the Hotel Ritz, in the form of a company of armed men who introduced themselves as *sindicalistas* and announced that the hotel was being taken over as a headquarters, or a hospital—there appeared to be some uncertainty, but none on the point that the guests were

to clear out with what they had on their backs or could carry in their hands. *Pronto! En seguida!*

Lanny stood on the same footing as all the others. He had no way to let them know that he was a comrade; they would have laughed at him if he had tried. He had foreseen what might be on the way, and had his money sewed up inside his belt, and the Comendador wrapped in light oil-cloth; everything else could be replaced, even his precious card-file, of which there was a duplicate in Bienvenu, and his correspondence, of which he had made notes and sent them home. Everything else was at the disposal of the invaders. "Help yourselves, *compañeros*."

They were doing it anyhow, going through all his effects, for they found him a suspicious character; he had such elegant things, and so many papers—what was more likely than that a Fascist agent should masquerade as an American? Did he have any guns? Any tobacco or liquor? When he assured them that the large cylinder contained an old oil painting they found it hard to believe, for to them a painting was something flat and rigid in a frame, and they had never heard of the idea that it could be rolled. Lanny was destined to have that same trouble over and over, and to get very tired of explanations, but he must never let politeness and urbanity fail for one moment. It takes no longer than that to die dead in a civil war!

X

The art expert emerged from the Hotel Ritz carrying the Comendador on one shoulder and a suitcase in one hand. He stood for a minute or two, looking up and down the broad *calle*, wondering which way to go. Deciding that any place was safer than where he was, started towards the Plaza de Cataluña, thinking he might put up at the Colón. The Church of Santa Ana was still burning, and, strangely enough, there was nobody watching the fire. That ought to have warned Lanny, but he wasn't used to revolutions or to the thought of personal danger. He didn't realize the situation until he was near the Plaza and observed several men with rifles crouching behind the corner of a building, one of them aiming and firing at the hotel. From the windows of the great structure came answering shots, and one of these shots, or some other, passed Lanny's head with a sound like the wailing of a lost soul.

The visitor never did find out what happened there; whether the militia had tried to take over the hotel and some of the guests had resisted or whether the Fascists had seized it as a strong point. One

hint was enough for Lanny, and he stayed not on the order of his going ; without a thought of dignity or diplomatic immunity, he ran as fast as was possible with his clumsy bundles, back the way he had come and into another street. The broad open spaces of plazas and the long vistas of *ramblas* lost all their charms for him, and the splendours of de luxe hotels no longer lured him ; he decided that he would turn proletarian for a while and take a chance on bed-bugs instead of bullets.

This part of Barcelona had been laid out in recent times ; the old city walls had been torn down and the spaces filled with wide boulevards called *rondas*. There was no place to hide, and everywhere Lanny turned it seemed that there was shooting. The Fascists were using homes and clubs and churches as fortresses, firing from windows and roof-tops. The Marxist volunteers were roaming the streets, seeking their enemies wherever they could be found, laying siege to buildings and seizing near-by buildings as counter-fortresses. Lanny realized that he had done something very foolish to get himself into the midst of such a free-for-all.

Breathless, and perspiring in semi-tropical sunshine, he dashed across the Ronda de San Pedro, south-eastwards to where he knew there was a tangle of small and obscure streets. He still clung to the Comendador and the suitcase. In a block where there was no shooting he saw a small hotel and darted inside, joining a number of persons who perhaps had entered for the same compelling reason. They stared in surprise at a well-dressed stranger with such an unusual burden.

Lanny went to the desk and addressed the clerk in his most polished Spanish : "*Por favor, una habitación con baño.*"

The little man with black moustaches twisted to needle-points inquired : "*El Señor es americano ?*" and then : "Perhaps you would rather speak English ?"—a great relief in an emergency.

"I ran into some shooting," explained Lanny ; "and I ran farther."

"I was once employed in Chicago," replied the little man, with a twinkle in his dark eyes. "I had the same experience there ; it was bootleggers."

Lanny was glad to laugh. Then, thinking an explanation due : "I have an oil painting with me, and apparently people think it is a machine-gun or something of the sort. I would like to leave it in a room where it won't be shot at."

He obtained a room for about one-tenth of what he had been paying at the fashionable place, and much safer. He examined both the Comendador and himself and made sure that he had no wounds.

and the Comendador no more; then he got the Sunday newspapers, and with the help of the little pocket dictionary which he was never without, he read the details of events up to the previous midnight. Afterwards he went downstairs to the telephone and tried to find the teachers' syndicate in the book, but he didn't know the exact name or any way to get enlightenment. Raoul would be worried about him, but there was no use trying to reach him until the firing was over. By that time Raoul might be dead, or in the hands of the Fascists, which would come to the same thing.

XI

The sound of cannon and the rattle of machine-guns could be heard from the windows of Lanny's room all that Sunday and late into the night. There was no restaurant in this cheap hotel, but one just across the street, and that was the only place to which he ventured. He had the hotel porter file two cablegrams for him, one to Robbie and one to Beauty, saying that he was safe and well; after which he sat in the lobby, in conversation with the owner of a tobacco-shop near by and a cattle-grower who had come to town with his *vacas* and was worried because the Anárcho-Syndicalists had seized them and given him a piece of paper which would be worthless if the other side won. Which side he wanted to win he carefully avoided saying. All of them agreed that civil wars were bad for business of any sort, whether it was *cigarros*, *vacas*, or *pinturas*.

No more news that day; but next morning's papers blazed with headlines about the attempt of the Fascists to seize the city. Government planes had bombed the arsenal and the artillery barracks, and heavy fighting was still going on in many places where the rebels had seized buildings. General Goded, commander of the rebel regiments, had been made a prisoner of war. Some rebel officers had committed suicide rather than surrender. The militia of the Marxist unions was patrolling all streets and arresting suspects; which was hint enough to Lanny to stay right where he was.

He sent the porter of the hotel round the corner to a radio shop to buy a small instrument, and with that in his room he had plenty of visitors and opportunity to improve his Spanish and even his Catalan. Sailors of the warships had revolted and locked their officers below decks, or thrown the active Fascists overboard. Five such vessels had been bombing the rebels in Ceuta. General Mola, marching against Madrid from Pamplona, had been stopped in the Guadarrama Mountains thirty-five miles from the capital. Heavy

fighting was reported in Seville and other cities which Lanny had visited ; he thought of the people he had met in them and the parts they would be playing. He listened to the comments of his visitors—people of the middle classes, destined to be ground between the upper and the nether millstones. They kept their hopes and fears to themselves, and Lanny professed to be interested in but one thing—getting out of the war zone alive. He didn't mention the oil painting of a long-dead-and-forgotten grandee of Aragon, for fear that someone might mention the law against exporting it.

The fighting went on most of Monday, and every few minutes there would be news ; not always reliable, but the general trend was plain. The organized workers of the city were successfully defending their government, with the help of leaders sympathetic to their cause. In Madrid it was different, for there the government leaders were terribly afraid of the label Red or even Pink, and were still trying to make peace with Franco and distressed because he went ahead fighting them. There the people had to force the government to act ; the unionists had demanded and obtained arms, and then had swarmed to the Montaña barracks, headquarters of one of the revolting regiments, and were laying siege with one old cannon. By noon they had forced the garrison to surrender ; and the same at the Getafe barracks on the outskirts. Truckloads of people's militia were now patrolling the streets of the capital and storming all buildings where there was rebel resistance.

XII

Late that afternoon Raoul Palma turned up. He had been in distress about his friend, and had sat at a telephone and tried every hotel in the city ; this was one of the last—he had found it so hard to imagine Lanny in a small obscure place. Lanny said he was getting along fine ; if the fighting lasted long enough he would know both languages of Barcelona. He had made a number of friends—and Raoul mustn't upset them by any bad news !

Locked up in Lanny's room they talked freely, and Raoul told how he had been travelling here and there addressing meetings of the workers. The moment the fighting stopped they would proceed to take over the principal industries and reorganize them. Some would be conducted on the anarchist principle of local autonomy and some on the Socialist principle of state control. The Fascists would realize too late what they had accomplished by their coup—they had turned all Catalonia and perhaps all Spain over to

working-class control, inspired and guided by Marxist leadership. Raoul was full of excitement, riding on the clouds and skipping over the mountain-tops. Spain was going to be a new Soviet Union, conducted with more skill and less violence.

"Oh, Lanny!" said his friend. "It is too bad for you to be missing all these things. If you could come with me and let me introduce you at headquarters they would welcome you with open arms."

"Perhaps so," said Lanny; "but then the story would go back to France and the picture business would die a slow death."

"I suppose so," agreed Raoul sorrowfully. "But you are missing wonderful events."

He described what had happened on the Paseo de Colón, the broad esplanade of the Barcelona docks, on that Sunday morning while Lanny had been looking out of his hotel window at the burning of the church. Near one end of the Paseo is a military barracks, and the workers of the docks got word that the troops there had joined the rebels and were setting up a barricade. The workers came swarming out of their homes, men, women, and children, many of them half dressed. They had only such weapons as they could grab up, sticks and stones, carving-knives, and clubs studded with nails, such as Raoul had told them to prepare. With these they had swarmed against barricades defended by twelve machine-guns. In spite of the massacre they had attacked again and again. Some twelve hundred lay dead or wounded, but they had beaten down the troops and captured the machine-guns and turned them against the barracks.

That was the way history was being made, and Barcelona and Madrid were being saved for the workers' cause. The Pink orator was so excited that he began a speech about it to his friend. But then he broke off in the middle, saying: "Take care of yourself; you have a job to do also. Keep off the streets, and call me if you get into any trouble." He gave his telephone number—and then: "*Adiós!*"

XIII

Lanny spent the next two days very cheerfully and agreeably, watching what he thought was the victory of his side in an abortive civil war. He read in the morning and afternoon papers, now all Red, and heard over the radio, no less Red, how the militia had stormed the Nautical Club and found in it four thousand hand-grenades and a store of dynamite; they had burned the club, and

several churches which had also been used as arsenals by the conspirators. He heard that four thousand militiamen were on the way in trucks and buses to put down the rebelling regiment in Saragossa; probably his motor-car was retracing its flight from that city, perhaps transporting the commander of the expedition. He saw a photograph of the very large Hotel Colón, considerably damaged, but he restrained his desire to visit the scene.

On Wednesday morning Raoul came again, and now his state of fine fervour was greatly reduced. "Lanny," he said, "I think you ought to get out of here without any more delay."

"What's the matter?" asked the American. "Haven't you got them licked?"

"We have Franco licked, but that's only the beginning of our troubles, I'm afraid. It's the old story of factional splits. The Marxists and the Anarcho-Syndicalists are quarrelling among themselves over the question of power and how industry is to be resumed."

"But I just heard over the radio that El Presidente has ordered everybody back to work!"

"I know; but will they go, and how long will they stay? I'm afraid there may be more fighting, and what's the use of your taking the risk when you can't do a thing about it?"

"You don't want to come along, Raoul?"

"Oh, I can't do that; I have a job here. I have managed to get some influence, and I'll be working day and night trying to reconcile the different groups and persuade them to make concessions. We Spaniards are terribly poor compromisers, but we have to learn, if we're going to make democracy work. Somebody who has lived abroad has to show them how."

"All right," Lanny said. "But how can I get out? I'm told the coast road is blocked, and I'd probably be stopped by a hundred patrols before I got to the border."

"There's a ship just come from France to take the athletes home, and I think you ought to try to get on that."

"The athletes" referred to an odd situation, which provided a sort of comic relief to the battle of Barcelona. It so happened that the Olympic games were being held in Berlin this summer, to the delight of all Nazi-Fascists and the disgust of all humane persons. The workers of Europe were boycotting these games and had arranged for their own to be held in Barcelona. Wherever there were class-conscious unionists in numbers sufficient to afford the luxury, they had sent a team of competitors; the French had sent more than a hundred, hoping to make a great sweep of the events. The opening was to have been on Saturday, the day after the Fascists

started their coup; Sunday, when the principal events were scheduled, saw the hottest fighting in the city's streets and the athletes had to spend their time like Lanny Budd, sitting in hotel rooms and hardly daring to look out of the windows.

Now the French government had sent a small steamship to bring their team to safety. The vessel had been admitted to the otherwise tightly closed port. Lanny said: "Do you suppose they would take me?"

Raoul answered: "You know how to use money."

That was true. Lanny had learned from his father that the captain of a vessel always has a cabin of his own and will share it with somebody if he is offered a sufficient inducement. Lanny knew that what he had sewed up in his belt would be enough for any such purpose; so he packed his bag, disconnected his radio set and presented it to Raoul, and the two of them put the Comendador on their shoulders and marched him downstairs. Lanny paid his bill and said good-bye to his various acquaintances, and the pair set out for the docks. No use thinking of a taxi or any such luxury; they would ride Shanks' mare, and Raoul would explain matters to any patrols they encountered.

XIV

Such was Lanny Budd's unheroic retirement from the battle of Barcelona. No one took any potshots at him, and after a long walk he found the passenger steamer *Chella* at her dock, and was informed that the vessel was taking extra passengers at two hundred and fifty francs each—about ten dollars—which Lanny promptly produced. A constant stream of foreigners arrived, some of them brought in cars of the French consulate with large flags for their protection. Before the small vessel sailed there were more than a thousand persons aboard, and Lanny found that he was to share a cabin with five other men. He didn't mind, because it was a clear night, and a proper *douceur* had procured him a steamer-chair on deck with his name on a tag. Another *douceur* entitled the painting to a corner in the captain's own cabin, in consonance with the Comendador's dignity and prestige.

Lanny enjoyed conversations with a number of members of French trade unions who had athletic ambitions: small and wiry ones who did the hundred-metre dash; tall and lean ones who ran five thousand metres or ten thousand; giants with mighty muscles who put the sixteen-pound shot or hurled the discus or engaged in wrestling bouts. One and all they were certain that they would

have broken some of the world's records, put the Nazi Olympics to shame, and vindicated the honour of the class-conscious proletariat of the world. One and all they were certain saw the date of the Franco uprising had not been an accident, but that part of the Nazi conspiracy to deprive the labour internationalists of glory. One and all they were proud to carry home the story of a workers' military victory—even though they had had to be hidden in hotel rooms while it was being won.

The *Chella* reached Marseille next day, and all came ashore. Correspondents of the American press associations were on hand, for news out of Barcelona was being awaited by the whole world. But the reporters hadn't heard about the son of Budd-Erling, and before they had time to scan the passenger list, Lanny had come ashore with his suitcase and his painting, had satisfied the French customs and passport authorities, and found himself a taxi-cab not commandeered. When he told the driver that he wanted to drive to the Cap d'Antibes, that son of the warm south was startled, but said: "*Je m'en fiche*"—which meant in substance that he didn't give a hang provided the passenger had the price of a two-hundred-kilometre ride. Lanny assured him that he had plenty.

But first he would go to the nearest post-office. There he wrote a cablegram to his father, saying that he was safe and please to notify Irma; one to his mother saying that he was safe and please to notify Rick; and one to Zoltan Kertezsi in Paris:

"Just arrived with Goya my property twelve bullet holes through Goya none through me want your advice are you coming south if not will come to you proceeding Bienvenu wire me there grand story but revolutions no fun Lanny."

BOOK SIX

THROUGH SLAUGHTER TO A THRONE

22

Put Money in Thy Purse

I

ONE of the communications which Lanny found at Bienvenu was a cablegram from Joseph Barnes, asking if he had any plans for coming to New York, otherwise "Uncle Joseph" wished to come to Europe to meet him at whatever place he might indicate. "I suppose that means Irma wants a divorce," said Lanny to himself; he had nobody else to say it to, being alone on the estate except for the servants. He cabled that he was planning to leave for Paris and then for London, and would be happy to meet Uncle Joseph in either city at approximate dates which he gave. Then he called Jerry Pendleton to come over and play tennis, go swimming, eat dinner, and spear fish in the evening. It was well enough to use his reason and say that it was necessary to cut Irma out of his life, but emotionally she was an amputated limb that still ached.

Zoltan Kertezsi had been resting at Spa, in Belgium, and wired that he would come to Paris at once. Lanny got himself a new car, less expensive than the lost one, and some new bags and other belongings. He got a secretary and attended to his accumulated correspondence. He dictated an account of his adventures for his father and mother, with copies to Bess and Rick and Trudi. He paid a visit to the Señora Villareal and told her about her paintings. She had already taken his advice and had the Zuloaga shipped out to her, and Lanny had found a purchaser by cable; now he received the money from his client, paid it over to the Señora, and saw to having the picture shipped. He called on Raoul's wife and gave her some money. After that he was ready to set out for the north, with the Comendador and his own thoughts for company.

Mixed thoughts, derived from his reading in the current newspapers. All accounts agreed that Barcelona and Madrid were firmly in the hands of their governments; but in both north and south the

rebels had been gaining. General Mola was holding a position in the Guadarramas, an hour's motor ride from Madrid, while Franco was landing shiploads of troops in Cádiz and apparently establishing himself firmly in the south-west. It appeared that Spain was in for a real civil war—a dreadful one, for Franco was taking few prisoners.

The most alarming news, which Lanny got from the left-wing papers, was that in the first week of the outbreak eighteen bomber planes manned by Italian Army pilots had been flown from Italy to Spanish Morocco, apparently to be used for ferrying troops across the Strait. Rather embarrassing for Mussolini when two of them were forced to land in French Morocco, and the French government asked for an explanation. What Il Duce said was that they were "volunteers"; they had flown of their own accord, motivated by intense sympathy for their Fascist brothers imperilled by the wicked Reds. When you tried to imagine eighteen officers of Mussolini's army stealing his planes and running off with them, you had something to smile over—unless you were made sick by the spectacle of brazen lying in public affairs. Lanny wondered: "Was this going to be the next device of Fascism: to destroy the people's government of another country by means of volunteers?"

II

Paris looked good on a still and warm summer evening: a city with no buildings on fire and no bullets imitating the wailing of lost souls; a city where everybody said what he or she thought, printed it in newspapers or leaflets, shouted it in public meetings, put it on banners or transparencies and paraded it on the streets. Sometimes, to be sure, you got your head cracked while doing this, but you had a fair chance to crack the other fellow's head, which seemed at least an attempt at equity. Lanny, as usual, was not able to make up his mind to a choice between evils; he wanted very much to see capitalism ended, but he hated to see people killed or killing.

He took his precious burden to his hotel suite—the same he had had on his last visit, for you could take your choice at the end of July. He had a wooden frame made, unrolled the Comendador and tacked him on to it, and then invited Zoltan to have a look. A great moment in a grown-up playboy's life, for he thought he had got something extra special, and was on pins and needles until he had it confirmed. Little shivers ran all over him while Zoltan took a long look, and little golden bells tinkled inside him when his elder and

mentor exclaimed: "Lanny, that's the real thing! You've got a Goya, beyond question."

It was unfortunate that the ancient grandee had got these modern war wounds, but Zoltan said that none of them was mortal from the point of view of repair technicians. If there had been a hole through one eye, or anywhere in the face, it would have been difficult indeed; but such things as firestones, and the cloth of a uniform, the shine of boots and the dark background of a curtain—expert doctors of paintings could cover these holes, especially when they were no wider than the calibre of a machine-gun bullet.

Lanny had supposed that little patches of canvas would be put under each hole, but Zoltan said this wouldn't do, because bubbles of air would get under in places, and the doctored spots would show unevenness in the course of the years. What would have to be done with such a valuable work was "relining" it; a complete new canvas would be added, at the back of the old. Zoltan would take him to a clever *demoiselle* who had done a great deal of *nettoyage*, the cleaning of old paintings, for the Louvre. She did it directly with her sensitive fingers, lightly rubbing off the dirt and the old varnish. She was an ethical person, and never did any repainting except in cases of actual damage, such as Lanny had in this instance. Neither did she put on a heavy glassy coat of thick new varnish, the favourite device of dealers to delight the unwary and sell them old masters at inflated prices.

The first thing to be done, Zoltan urged, was to obtain the best possible photographs of the painting both front and back, so that a future purchaser might be shown exactly what the damage had been and the nature of the repairs. In this case the living Comendador had written on the back his name and titles, his age, and the dates of his sittings, and all this was of the greatest importance as proof of authenticity. Too bad he hadn't been a woman, Zoltan said; for portraits of women and children always brought more money. But this was all right—it ought to fetch as much as twenty thousand dollars.

Lanny told what he had paid for the painting, but pledged his friend to secrecy; he wasn't going to tell anybody else, because he was somewhat embarrassed about it. Zoltan said it was a delicate question how far one participant in a bargaining-duel was obliged to spare his competitor; of course, if it was a minor, a senile or other helpless person, that made a difference; but in general an adult was expected to look out for himself, and if you paid what he was willing to take, without any force or intimidation, your conscience could be clear. Lanny said that Don Pedro had been rather helpless as a

bargainer, but would be equally so to keep whatever money he got. The chances were he had already parted with what Lanny had paid him. To salve his conscience Lanny was going to give every penny he made from the deal to the cause he had at heart, not even deducting the expenses of the journey.

They talked about politics for a while, and Zoltan was rather pessimistic as to the Spanish cause. He had listened to people talking at the Belgian resort, members of the upper classes from France and Germany and England. With hardly an exception anywhere, the statesmen and big business-men looked upon the Spanish people's government as a grave menace to their system, a nest of Red intrigue and agitation established in the centre of the Western world. They took no stock whatever in the claims of Madrid to be "liberal" and "republican" in the old sense. In these days such words were mere camouflage for Marxism; a Pink, however sincere, became a tool of the Reds.

Lanny said: "It might be my father talking."

"They are blood-brothers on all the six continents and the seven seas," replied Zoltan.

"Not blood-brothers, gold-brothers," countered the son of Budd-Erling.

III

Lanny had written Trudi Schultz that he was on the way, and as soon as he had had the painting photographed and got the repair work started, he went to her little studio, intending to take her out to dinner. But she had fixed a supper, so that they could talk quietly. The story he had to tell was the most exciting in the world to her. Spain had suddenly become a second Fatherland to a German refugee—and this time the people had not been helpless, this time they had weapons and were defending their cause. "They are stubborn fighters," she said. "I picked up a book about their history. Do you know about the siege of Saragossa?"

Lanny replied that he had read about it recently. He had hoped to inspect some of the scenes of that desperate stand against the armies of Napoleon, which had been one of the causes contributing to his ultimate downfall; but he hadn't dared enter the town, and the only persons he had spoken to were a filling-station attendant and two Fascist officers. Trudi plied him with questions about the workers' groups of Barcelona and Madrid, about Raoul and Constancia de la Mora; how she wished that she was free, so that she could write to these heroic comrades and assure them of her

sympathy ! She had got herself a small radio set, but couldn't get Spanish stations very often, and she distrusted what she called the "capitalist" stations. She read *Le Populaire* every day, and had received a note from Lanny asking her to save the copies for him. He told her how he had sent an air-mail letter to Longuet, and now he found it duly spread before the Socialists of Paris, in the form of "Air-mail Communication from Our Special Correspondent in Spain."

What was going to happen ? Trudi's lips trembled as she listened to his answer. No use fooling one's self, it was going to be a hard struggle ; to-day there was a report that planes of the German Condor Legion had been flown to General Mola in the north. "Oh, God !" she exclaimed, although she wasn't sure she believed in this hypothesis. "Can it be possible that Léon Blum will permit things like that to happen ?"

"Blum is in a difficult position," replied Lanny. "He represents a coalition, and in France it is not the Premier but the Cabinet which decides."

"But, Lanny, can't they all see what it would mean to have Mussolini and Hitler set up a second front at the back door of France ?"

"Only military men see it that way," he replied ; "and Blum is pledged to peace-making." He repeated what he had just heard from his friend and mentor. "The business men of France fear Stalin far more than they fear Mussolini and Hitler combined," he told her.

"But they've just made an alliance with Stalin !"

"The Front Populaire forced that ; the business-men didn't want it and don't mean it. France is split in halves by the class struggle, and if it comes to a showdown between Communism and Fascism, poor Marianne will be one of her peasants with a horse hitched to each end of the cart and pulling opposite ways."

IV

Trudi reported on the progress of her work. So far she had had printed more than two hundred thousand anti-Nazi pamphlets and obtained their distribution in Germany. Several persons who did the distributing had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo—she didn't know who they were, but this report had been made to her. So far there was no sign that German agents in Paris had uncovered her or those with whom she was dealing ; but of course that might

happen any day. She was disposed to give Lanny some idea of how the distributing was done, but he stopped her, saying that he didn't want the responsibility. "So long as you know it's all right, I'm satisfied," he said, and gave her part of the money he had got from the Zuloaga. "I'll need some of it," he said; "I have to pay for a fancy job of repairs on a picture I brought out from Spain."

In the course of the evening there came a tap upon Trudi's door, and she signed to Lanny to step back into an alcove out of sight. He heard her say: "I'm sorry, André, but I can't see you this evening; I have someone here on a matter of business." After the caller had left and she had closed the door, she said: "That is a young student I met at the art school, a very sweet personality whom I'd like you to know if the circumstances were different."

"It is much better to keep your two lives apart," he assented.

"He seems to have fallen in love with me," Trudi added, "and that's unfortunate. Be sure that I didn't have anything to do with it."

She said this with her usual seriousness. Lanny, who liked to smile as he went through life, looked into those candid blue eyes and remarked: "You had something to do with it, even though you didn't know it." Then deciding that this would serve as a "lead," he added: "It is easy for any man to fall in love with you, Trudi. I will do it myself if you will let me."

"Oh, no, Lanny!" she exclaimed. They were sitting by the open window of the little studio, with the moon lighting one side of her face and the other in darkness. He thought that he could see the colour mount into one pale cheek.

"You know," he said, "I broke with Irma because we don't agree in our ideas. I made up my mind if I ever thought of love again, it would be some woman with whom I have no intellectual disagreements. It just so happens that you are the only woman I know who fits that formula."

"You ought to meet more women, Lanny!"

"My fond and adoring mother is for ever submitting them for my inspection. They all have money, and carefully cultivated charms which make them deadly traps for the intellectual life. My mother and her fashionable friends talk it over in secret, and they pick out some new bundle of delights, and before they bring her to me they take her aside and warn her about my eccentricities. You know, ideas don't mean much to the average woman, at least not in the smart world; they put them on and take them off like a new frock. So, if a débutante likes my looks and manners, she doesn't scruple to try to pretend that she is concerned about social problems. It is

really pathetic ; when one of them asks you to tell her all about Russia in fifteen minutes over the tea-cups, it becomes tragic."

"You ought to meet more serious women, Lanny."

"My friend Rick has voiced that idea. If I would go and visit him, his wife would be delighted to invite feminist ladies and Socialist ladies, and help to put me in a favourable light before them. Such arts are carefully cultivated among those classes where love means not merely romance, but also the transference of property rights, sometimes of great value. Seven years ago this month the captain of a dingy passenger-freighter in the North Sea pronounced me the husband of Irma Barnes and thereby gave me the usufruct of many millions of dollars ; the judge who will some day pronounce me no longer her husband will strip me of these claims and put me back where I started from."

"I know, Lanny ; it must be rather terrifying to think about."

"Our property system has many terrifying aspects. For a matter of twenty years I have been observing its power to distort and destroy human minds and characters. It constitutes a force so overwhelming that only a small fraction of mankind has any chance of resisting it. I am not sure if I myself am among this number ; I feel myself struggling in a net, and just when I think I am out of it I discover that another fold has been cast over my head and I am as helplessly entangled as ever."

V

This was a strange kind of wooing ; but it was Lanny's kind, and its ardour, while carefully repressed, would be sensed by a woman of Trudi's understanding. "You surprise me," she told him. "I have always thought you a firm-minded person. Certainly I don't know anyone who has done more for our cause."

"I have brought you sums of money, and that seems to you an extraordinary service ; but I assure you, the total amount wouldn't provide my wife with the means of making social appearances for any one of the four seasons of a year. As to my firmness of mind, you do not guess what wavering and wobbling goes on whenever I am confronted with one of those lovely creatures, all dressed up for the sacrifice like a lamb in some ancient religious procession."

Trudi couldn't keep from smiling with him. "Really, Lanny, you ought to live in England for a while and let Rick's wife perform that important service for you."

He had got a fair start, and decided to go ahead with his discourse. "I cannot live in England, Trudi. I am almost afraid to go there, because of an old love affair which haunts me."

"You mean some woman who has a claim on you?"

"Not in the ordinary sense of the word. She is far too proud ever to claim anything that she could not get. She is a member of the nobility, and was my first love; that was during the war, when I was only a boy, and I didn't understand that women of that class may go outside it to play but not to marry. Now she is the wife of an earl and the mother of a future earl; but she doesn't live with her husband, and I think she is waiting for me to ask for her."

"And would you be happy with her?"

"It would be the story of Irma all over again. Her class feelings are among her most deeply rooted instincts. She would let me alone, because it is the English way to allow for eccentricity and doing as you damn please; but she wouldn't have any understanding of my hopes or aims. I haven't seen her in the last few weeks, but I'm pretty sure that if I should hint my attitude to the Franco rebellion, she would say: 'But, Lanny, we can't let the Reds get airports and submarines bases on the Atlantic.'"

"And yet it is possible for you to be in love with her?"

"You are a saint, Trudi, and a completely integrated personality. You know exactly what you believe, and it is impossible for you to act or desire to act along any other line. I imagine it would be hard for you to understand, to say nothing of forgiving, a person like me, who has been torn since boyhood by two sets of ideas, two sets of inclinations, two worlds which are in conflict, and each has a claim upon me and lays hold of me and pulls. It used to be tolerable, in the old days when ideas were not taken too seriously; but now these two worlds have gone to war, and they pull as hard as they can and don't care if they pull me to pieces."

Perhaps she couldn't understand, but apparently she wanted to try. "You have a love in each of those worlds?"

"I have no love anywhere at present, Trudi."

"I mean, an impulse towards love."

"Ah, well, if you talk about impulses, you must learn not to take the matter too seriously, or else be prepared for a shock. The average man has many love impulses; and when he talks about loving one woman and cleaving to her for the rest of his life, he is under the influence of intense excitements which nature has put into his heart for her own purposes. If he keeps that pledge through the years, it is not because of his impulses, but because of public opinion, or religious faith, or intellectual conviction, or perhaps the strong and complex bond of shared experience. Being torn between two worlds as I am, naturally my love impulses are involved in that conflict, along with everything else. Does that shock you?"

"No, but it interests me greatly."

"I am telling you the truth as I know it, because the one conviction I have brought out of my misadventures in love and marriage is that there is no happiness except in frankness and understanding. When a man is very much in love he will make all sorts of promises, and afterwards he may keep them but be very unhappy doing so. It is much safer for the woman to know what he really is and really wants. Can you go that far with me?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, I have just spent a month or so travelling in a foreign country, during which I ran into some discomfort and some danger. I travelled with a man, and enjoyed few opportunities to talk with women; but I saw many, and naturally thought about them. What Goethe calls *das ewig weibliche* is seldom out of my consciousness; I don't think it is ever entirely out of any man's consciousness. I visited strange places, I had amusing adventures, and I would find myself thinking: 'How Trudi would enjoy this!' I would see some wistful little waif on the street, some toil-worn worker, or a sturdy brown militiaman with a gun hanging by a strap from his shoulder, and I would think: 'How Trudi would love to draw him!' Since that wasn't possible, I told myself what fun it would be sitting by this window, looking out over the roofs of Paris in the moonlight, and telling Trudi what I had seen. You will realize that that is one of the symptoms of love."

"Did you never think about your English lady?" inquired the woman, not without a touch of mischief.

"She didn't fit in Spain. What could it have meant but annoyance to her? She is used to servants knowing their places, and if she saw a great number of them rising up in insurrection she would have only one impulse, to telephone the Admiralty to send a cruiser."

"But you think of her in London?"

"Oh, of course; fashionable London is full of memories of happiness that we enjoyed together. But how can I come back from war in Spain and endure going to dinners and balls and theatre parties? I should feel myself a skunk."

VI

There was a long silence, and Trudi's voice was gentle and sad when she spoke again. "Lanny, you honestly mustn't get your thoughts centred on me. You know how it is: I can't stop thinking of Ludi."

"I understand," he said quietly. "But you will have to stop sooner or later. It's been more than three years since you have heard from him or about him. How much longer can you persuade yourself that he is still alive?"

"How could he find me, Lanny? I can think of a score of friends in Germany who have vanished completely. If I wanted to communicate with them, I wouldn't have the remotest idea how; and the same would apply if they wanted to communicate with me."

"I know how Ludi could find you easily, and Ludi would know, too. He would reason that if you were alive you had probably escaped abroad, and one of his first thoughts would be that you have a friend in France who sold your sketches for you and who would surely be helping you now. He knows my address—or if he has forgotten it, he has not forgotten Budd Gunmakers of Newcastle, Connecticut, U.S.A."

"But he may be held incommunicado, Lanny."

"Few prisoners are ever completely incommunicado. There are jailers and there are comrades, and as time passes they devise ways. When I was in the Munich city jail, they were tapping water-pipes all over the place, and everybody in the building knew about the blood purge that was going on outside. Believe me, in three years Ludi would have found somebody who was going out and who would remember a simple message: 'Write to Lanny Budd, Juan-les-Pins, France, and tell him where I am and ask him to find my wife and tell her.'"

"I admit the force of your argument," she answered; "but I can't get away from the thought that he *might* be alive, and if so, the longer he was in prison, the more he would need me when he came out."

"All right, dear, if that's the way it is I'll wait a while longer. I don't want to put any pressure on you, or give you anything else to be unhappy about. I'm bound for London, and meantime you can think it over."

"You'll meet that English lady?"

"She may be at some of the functions to which my mother will have to be escorted. But it'll be all right now, because I've told you about her, and you will stand between us."

"Is that why you told me?"

"What else? I've decided that I want to help Spain, and I'm building up a barricade, like those I encountered in the streets of Barcelona."

"You are quite sure there is no chance of happiness between you and Irma?"

"I have an appointment to meet Irma's uncle in London, and I don't think he's crossing the sea just for a chat or to hear about my travels. It's been almost a year since Irma and I parted, and I'm guessing that she's interested in some other man and wishes to arrange a divorce."

"She will be the one to get it, I suppose."

"That is the convention."

"It has occurred to me, Lanny—ought you to be coming here? Nobody would believe that we are just friends."

"I have thought of it," he said, "and I take the trouble to make sure that I am not being followed. Members of Irma's family might conceivably take such steps, but I don't think she herself would. She does not go out of her way to look for trouble or to make it. She will rent a comfortable house in some place like Reno, Nevada, and take some woman friend along for company, and several of her servants to wait on them. She'll have to stay only a couple of months."

"A most extraordinary arrangement!" said Trudi.

"I have never visited the Far West," replied the grass-widower-to-be. "I have heard a lot about California, and you and I might enjoy a trip there some day."

It was something more than a hint.

VII

Lanny arranged to take Jean Longuet for a drive and have lunch in a quiet place in the suburbs, so that he could tell the story of Barcelona. He hoped to do the same with Léon Blum, but the Premier had gone to London to consult about the emergency. Longuet reported that there was a split in the Cabinet over the issue of aid to Spain; the Radical Socialist members were unwilling to sanction any steps which might lead to war, and they threatened to resign—which would have brought down the Blum government. Blum himself had made the same threat, but had not stood by it. Longuet quoted him as saying: "Everything is difficult. France is not ready for war, and I do not want war. If it comes, it will wreck our whole social reform programme."

"*Mon dieu!*" exclaimed Lanny. "What is the use of social reform, if Hitler and Mussolini succeed in establishing a western front against you? Germany is getting ready for war as no nation ever did in history, and if she builds a Nazi fortress in Northern Spain, what will that mean to France and Britain?"

"You'll have to go to London and ask that. Downing Street is telling Blum that he can expect no British support if he gets into war with Germany and Italy over the question of aid to Spain; and of course both Mussolini and Hitler are telling us that if we sell munitions to Spain it will mean war."

"The same bluff they worked over Abyssinia and then the Rhineland! Any opposition to anything they want will mean war. On that basis they can take the whole of Europe, one slice at a time."

It was a tragic situation for editors and party leaders who had fought a hard campaign on the issues of reforming the Banque de France and socializing the munitions industry and granting shorter hours to labour. They had won a resounding victory on those issues, and now here came a gigantic military tank, threatening to roll over the whole thing and smash it flat!

From this conference Lanny went to a *réunion* in the great Salle Wagram, called by those elements of the Left which saw the situation clearly and were not afraid to face it. He discovered that the Communists, men of action, always eager to force every issue, had taken possession of this meeting. The crowd sang the old revolutionary songs of France, the *Marseillaise* and the *Carmagnole*, but they sang the *Internationale* more frequently and loudly; they gave the signal of the upraised fist and shouted: "*Les soviets partout!*"—soviets everywhere. The speakers were from the various Left and labour and even women's groups; through channels of their own they had learned exactly what was going on in Spain, and an orator told about the execution squads in the towns which Franco had taken, how they dug great pits in the cemeteries, drove the prisoners out by the truckload, stood them on the edge of the pits, then shot them and tumbled them in. The crowds screamed with horror and fury, and the cry: "*Des avions pour l'Espagne!*"—aeroplanes for Spain—sounded loud enough to be heard in the Foreign Office across the Seine. They chanted it slowly, putting equal emphasis on each of the seven syllables.

Lanny had taken Trudi to this meeting, but they had not entered together. After the meeting he got the car and met her at an appointed corner. She had been deeply shaken by the oratory, and exclaimed: "Lanny, we must help the people of Spain, no matter how often we hear it called a Communist fight!"

"Well, of course," he said. "That applies to the people's struggle everywhere. If we give up because they call us Reds, we might as well hand the world over to Hitler and Franco and be done with it."

VIII

He went to see how the Comendador was coming along, and stood for hours watching this fascinating work. Amazing how the rich crimsons of the costume leaped out, and the gold of the buttons and the braid, sparkling as freshly as when Goya had painted them ! Lanny had thought the grim old grandee was wearing a green uniform of a most unattractive shade, but when the dirty yellow varnish came off, lo and behold, it was a bright blue. The holes weren't going to cause much trouble, the clever *demoiselle* insisted, for the bullets had left clean, sharp edges, and when the job was finished it would require X-ray tests to find the damage.

She described to her client the complicated process of relining. The front of the painting would be covered with paper, and the painting then turned over and the back carefully cleaned ; it would receive two coats of rabbit-skin glue, then a special kind of gauze with another glue made of fish-glue, rye and wheat flour, and Venetian turpentine. The new canvas of pure linen would be stretched on a special frame larger than the painting, laid flat over it, and ironed down several times with a heavy iron slightly warmed.

When this job was thoroughly dry the whole thing would be stretched on a permanent frame, and then would begin the delicate work of filling up and painting the holes in the original canvas. The filling was done with a specially prepared mastic, and the paints were mixed with egg-white, not with oil. All paints change colour in the course of time, and such tempera paints change quickly, so that the results can be observed. The *demoiselle* explained that it was something of a trick to select shades which did not match when they were applied, but would match a week or two later.

Lanny sat for hours watching the fascinating work of *nettoyage*, sharing in the pleasure of new discoveries. One of them was worth a large sum of money to him ; the *demoiselle* with the sensitive fingers was rubbing lightly the gold ornament on the watch-fob of the Comendador, when she gave an exclamation of pleasure and said : " I think we have something important here, Monsieur. You know that it was the practice of this painter to sign his name in strange places."

" Yes," he replied. " I have seen one on a ring on the sitter's hand."

"This ornament is a seal, and it has some strange design on it."

After that Lanny followed every stroke of the swift fingers, and little by little there appeared letters on the shining gold. Complete, the inscription read: "F. J. de Goya y L.," and of course it settled the question of the genuineness of the painting.

In high spirits because of this vindication, Lanny went to call on his Communist uncle, and found him up and hard at work. A tough old nut he had called himself, and said that he lived on faith, hope, and charity—directed, of course, to the proletariat exclusively. He wanted to hear his nephew's story and then to draw conclusions in accord with the party line. Really, he had all the arguments this time, for here were the capitalist exploiters and the aristocrats, the professional killers and the priests of God all united to confirm the Leninist formula; it seemed that it couldn't be a slice of history, it must be a laboratory experiment, arranged for purposes of demonstration! Said Uncle Jesse: "How many times have I told you that the propertied classes will never submit to a decision by majority vote, but will take up arms to protect their privileges?"

Lanny couldn't keep from smiling. "A great many times, Uncle Jesse."

He told the ageing warrior what Raoul had reported, how in the sacristy of the Barcelona Cathedral the government had found a treasure of sixty million pesetas in gold. That, too, seemed to fit the Bolshevik formula rather than the Christian. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Jesse Blackless was a preacher's son, and could quote Scripture like the devil!

IX

From Montmartre, the traveller set out for London, stopping overnight at Les Forêts. Emily was feeling better than she had for some time, and glad as always to hear the adventures of her protégé. When she heard about his date with Joseph Barnes she was sad, for it meant the end of one of her efforts at happiness for others. Believing as she did in money, she told Lanny that he was foolish to let the Barnes fortune go without claiming a share; he had certainly helped to save it during the seven years that he had been prince consort. When he replied that money wasn't going to mean so much in the future as it had in the past, he was speaking a language which an old woman of the old world had no means of translating.

She had an interesting item of news: Kurt Meissner was in Paris. He had come out to see her and played some of his new compositions, very fine things, she thought. He had offered to play at one of her *soirées*, and in spite of Lanny's warnings a *salonnière* had not known how to decline. "Really, Lanny," she said, "I find it hard to imagine the German government being able to employ a distinguished musician such as Kurt has become."

"Kurt is a former artillery officer and a former secret agent, and surely you must understand that when a German has once been either of these things he is never thereafter a free man. And now that Germany has gone to war again, of course he is subject to command."

"Germany at war, Lanny?"

"Apparently your newspapers haven't made it clear to you. Hitler and Mussolini have embarked on a war to put down the people's government of Spain. They have been planning it for the past six months, and already there are German planes in the fight. No doubt the pilots will be in the employ of commercial concerns, and the technicians will be tourists, and so on, but they will be Nazi officers and men, under the orders of the General Staff or the Gestapo."

"But what would Kurt be doing in Paris?"

"I don't know, but I am guessing that he is here to keep the French government from interfering in this war. He is to encourage and activate those reactionaries and native Fascists who are trying to frighten Blum. Kurt will meet members of the Cabinet, politicians and editors, their wives and mistresses, and influential ladies who conduct salons. He will play his music for them, charm them by his distinguished manners, and then, over the tea-cups, he will point out to them the grave peril involved in letting the Reds get a foothold in Western Europe. He'll point out that Germany is the only country which is in position to bulwark Europe against the advance of the Bolshevik hordes. He will point out that the Front Populaire in France is identical in all respects with the Frente Popular in Spain, and that the Reds in France plan to do just what the Spanish have done—that is, burn churches and confiscate church property and divide the estates of the rich among the peasants—and how would you like to have your beautiful estate divided up among your tenants?"

Mrs. Chattersworth began to laugh; and when Lanny looked inquiringly she said: "It may be just a coincidence, but Kurt said nearly all those things!"

"Coincidences do not happen in Nazi affairs. They have taken

over the old German bureaucracy, the Army, and the scientific laboratories, and everything is planned to the minutest detail and carried through with precision."

"And you believe that Kurt is being paid to present such arguments to me?"

"I haven't the slightest doubt that he enjoys a salary and a liberal expense account. He will play at your *soirée* and meet your friends, and thus be established in the very highest circles. He will play for other ladies, and be passed from group to group, and worm his way into people's homes and their private affairs. He is not alone, you understand; he is a member of a powerful organization, with hundreds of paid agents in Paris, and they are not all of them musicians and men of genius. Their machine includes spies and burglars and even assassins—do not forget that the Nazis have already murdered three premiers in Europe and a king, also a foreign minister of France, not to mention great numbers of small and obscure idealists. They have dossiers on you and your friends and thousands of other prominent persons; they will intimidate some and bribe others; they will eat like termites into the centre of French public life, and either bring French policy into line with Nazi interests or else destroy France."

Emily Chattersworth had known and loved Lanny Budd since he was a baby, and had watched him grow up and develop a widely inquiring mind. Now she really didn't know what to make of him. He had gone off by himself into a region as strange and terrifying to her as the swamps of the Amazon filled with crocodiles or the mountains of New Guinea swarming with headhunters. She knew no other traveller in those regions, and she knew that Lanny's father, his mother, and his wife all agreed that he was a victim of designing and intriguing agitators.

"Dear Lanny," she said, "I am old and not very well, and this new world which is developing is too terrible for me to comprehend. What you tell me sounds like a scenario for a horror film."

"I tell you that all the horror writers of Hollywood put together will never be able to imagine anything to equal the reality of Nazism; and precisely because it is real, Hollywood has not dared to attack it. The controls which the Nazis are developing would surely not fail to include anything so powerful as the motion-picture industry; so we have films about wicked and criminal individuals, but none about a world system which offers itself to the capitalist class as a means of putting down the labour movement and keeping it down for a thousand years."

I

Lanny's first destination in England was The Reach. He arrived at dinner-time, and afterwards the family sat out on the terrace in the moonlight and listened to his story of Spain and then of Paris. It was the making of several articles for a journalist, and Rick would begin to work at his typewriter the first thing in the morning. He was giving more and more of his time to political subjects, and his friends were warning him that his standing as a playwright was suffering in consequence; he had another play, but nobody would produce it because it was too bitter. Rick replied to his friends that if the Nazis and the Fascists were allowed to divide Europe between them, there very soon wouldn't be any drama.

There were the baronet and his wife, now an invalid, and Nina and Rick with all three of their children; Alfie now nineteen, his brother seventeen, and the girl sixteen. All these young people had been brought up to look at their world and do their own thinking about it. All three were tinged with Pink in various shades. Angela, the daughter, sounded very much like Bessie Bodd, and worried her mother; but Rick said that most such cases recovered in a year or two.

Lanny had been an intimate of this family since before the young people were born, and they looked upon him as a romantic personality; they drank in every word of his story, and very certainly it didn't tend to divert them from the leftward path. Even the old baronet, debonair and dilettante, got hot under the collar of his polo shirt, and said that the Prime Minister they had got ought to be shipped off to live with the Blackshirts whom he had allowed to humiliate the British Empire. Sir Alfred's sweet-natured wife, who had spent forty years trying to tone him down, begged him to remember that Baldwin had a case. Defending his course in private, he pleaded that the Empire wasn't sufficiently armed, and the reason was because labour and the Liberals had all gone pacifist. "I was one of them," said the baronet's wife, "and so were you, Alfred."

"What good would it do us to build up the fleet or the Air Force for the Tories to use?" burst out the older grandson.

Lanny could see that it was a confused situation. Great numbers of Britons had signed a pledge that they would never take part in any future war; and now, all of a sudden, here was a war that great numbers of them desired! A war to defend a duly elected people's

government against invaders ! Rick said : " We ought to stop speaking of this as a civil war. We might as well call the invasion of Abyssinia a civil war because Mussolini had native Abyssinians trained to fight on his side. Franco has a few Spaniards, but mostly it's the Foreign Legion and the Moors who are being used to crush the Spanish people."

XI

When the company broke up and Lanny went to his room, Alfie came there ; it was late, but he asked if he could have a chat, important to him. Lanny said : " Shoot ! "

First, the youngster wanted to know about Marceline : was she happy and likely to stay so ? Lanny thought she was, and would be—certainly so long as she and her husband were guests at Shore Acres. He was sorry if that sounded cynical, but there was no use letting Alfie grieve over a Marceline who had never existed. Alfie said he guessed that was the best way to look at it ; he hated to think of the girl having fallen into the hands of a Fascist S.O.B. Lanny said : " It really isn't that way. Vittorio seems to suit her very well. She looks upon him as a hero, and other people in her world do the same."

Alfie told what was troubling him most. He had got some training in the air in the previous summer, and now he wanted to go at once and perfect himself and serve as a pilot for Spain. Several of his friends were all on fire about it ; if Mussolini could send " volunteers," why shouldn't England match him man for man ? How did one set about it ?

Lanny answered that the subject of volunteers for Spain had been discussed at the *réunion* in Paris, and the speakers had called for fighting men. All they had to do was to get to the border, just beyond Perpignan, in Southern France. The trains to Portbou weren't running, but anybody could walk a mile through the tunnel and the militiamen would welcome him with open arms.

The only trouble was Alfie's mother ; he wanted Lanny's help in persuading her. Lanny said : " I rather think she has guessed. I was watching her face while you talked to-night."

Poor Nina ! Lanny had seen this coming for a long time. The Norns, or whoever had assigned her a birth-date, had been unkind ; she had been plunged into grief as a bride, and now again as a mother. But she had shared her husband's cause, and now her son's, so she couldn't try to hold him back. Lanny inquired : " Have you told your father ? "

" I only made up my mind to-night, hearing you talk. I'd like to

get several chaps over here to-morrow ; if you'll tell them about it I believe they'll all go."

"That'll make me popular with the mothers of this neighbourhood ! " said Lanny. "They'll want to know why I don't go myself."

"No, no," said Alf. "You leave it to us youngsters. You have your job and you're doing it well."

"What is it ? " asked Lanny, curious to know how he appeared to the new generation.

"You don't know how much you do for the pater, bringing him first-hand news the way you did last night. He finds it hard to get about, you know ; his knee bothers him more than he'll let anybody know. But when you come along, it gives him new heart and he starts work all over again."

"It seems to me I'm a pretty depressing messenger," remarked the older man. "It's been ages since I've had any sort of good tidings."

"That's not your fault. That's the time we're living in, and we have to buck up and go to work. We all thought we were going to have things easy, but it's clear now that we're not."

"Cheerio, Alf ! I buck the pater up, you buck me up, and when the pater bucks you up, the magic circle will be complete ! "

23

Sic Transit Gloria

LANNY went to town to keep his appointment with the chairman of trustees of the Barnes estate. Uncle Joseph was a tall distinguished-looking gentleman with hair turned silver ; he was a devoted guardian of other people's property, turning over to Irma an income of well over a million dollars a year, and taking for himself, as directed by the will, a salary of one thousand dollars a month. His duties had to do with pieces of printed paper called securities, and in his leisure time he collected other pieces known as half-dime libraries. They had been printed half a century ago and read by armies of messenger-boys, of whom little Joe Barnes had been one. When fresh from the press they had cost five cents each, but now

the silver-haired Joe would pay five dollars for any of the missing issues of the adventures of Deadwood Dick, Hawkshaw, or Frank Merriwell.

"Uncle Joseph"—Lanny assumed that he would still wish to be so addressed—never appeared in public except in immaculate attire, winter, summer, or the seasons between. Right now was the beginning of August, and he welcomed his guest in spotless cream Shantung. Londoners all said that the weather was frightfully hot, but this was a joke to anybody who had lived in New York. So said Joseph Barnes, and they availed themselves of that conversational crutch for a while; Lanny told about the weather in Spain, and the other expressed an unexpected interest in this subject. Evidently he was embarrassed by the errand on which he had come.

It would be a kindness to help him out; so the nephew-in-law said: "You have a message for me from Irma?"

"Yes, Lanny." And then a pause.

"I have been complying with her wishes, Uncle Joseph, and letting her alone, I hope this has not displeased her."

"No; but now she thinks the situation should be regularized." Then, taking the bit in his teeth: "She wants a divorce."

"That was my guess," said the other amiably.

"I am glad you are in accord," responded the old gentleman, much relieved. "As you know, I have always had the kindest feelings for you, and I hope these will continue."

"Certainly, Uncle Joseph. I have no reason to blame you for any of my troubles. Go ahead, please, and tell me what Irma has in mind."

The head trustee explained that his niece proposed to establish a residence in some state where a divorce could be had quickly and without serious charges being brought. Florida being out of the question in summer, she had been in correspondence with a reputable law firm in Reno. The most important question was the nature of the complaint she was to make, and it was about this that Uncle Joseph was charged to have a frank talk. Obviously a delicate matter, for few husbands take kindly to having their faults and offences listed and described in detail.

"Don't worry," said this cheerful offender. "I am aware that I am not an ideal partner for Irma. Let me say that, for reasons important to me, I don't want my political opinions brought into the action."

"Irma understands that."

"Very well, then. Tell me frankly what the lawyers think it necessary for me to have done."

"The charge will be incompatibility of temperament."

"That is agreeable to me."

"She will have to complain that you have been unsociable."

Lanny thought of the innumerable times when he had wanted to read the paper, or to play the piano, when Irma had wanted to gossip about her friends, her costumes, and her plans for the day. "That is true," he said.

"Also that you are, or were with her, extremely unco-operative."

"That is also true."

"And that you were uncordial to her friends."

"A perfect bear, Uncle Joseph."

The ambassador beamed. "That is all," he said. "You understand, of course, that Irma is required to cite instances in which these characteristics have been manifested."

"That goes without saying. You have a copy of the proposed complaint with you, Uncle Joseph?"

"I have; and we hope you won't find it necessary to make too many changes, for the allegations represent what the lawyers say is the customary minimum. You understand, it would not do to bring the suit and then have our request denied."

II

While Mr. Joseph Barnes looked over the afternoon paper, Lanny read an essay on his marital misdemeanours. It filled him with a natural and human desire to answer back; but that would have been contesting the divorce. "That's all right," he said. "I plead guilty to those charges. What do I do about it?"

"You have to have a lawyer to represent you in court and file what is known as a notice of appearance."

"And how do I find a lawyer in Reno?"

"Our own have been good enough to suggest one. All you have to do is to write and employ him, and agree to pay him a hundred dollars for his services. I, of course, will see that you are reimbursed."

"Not at all, Uncle Joseph. It is my interest to have this unhappy matter ended."

"Irma wishes me to tell you that her attitude on money matters remains what she stated to you in Germany."

"I remember it." I do not want any of her money."

"There is just one more problem," began the ambassador

hesitatingly. "Irma would like very much for you to consent that the custody of the child be awarded to her."

"I am sorry, Uncle Joseph, but that is out of the question. Irma and I discussed that also in Germany. The custody of the child will have to be shared equally between us."

"Will you tell me why you feel that is so important?"

"Because I am the child's father, and I think that every child needs a father's influence as well as a mother's. I have done nothing to forfeit my rights in the matter and I would not."

"Let us talk about it frankly, Lanny."

"Certainly. I have nothing to hide, and Irma gave me every assurance that she respected my rights and trusted me to make a wise and proper use of them."

"Just what use would you expect to make, Lanny?"

"I came to see the child recently and spent some time with her. I should expect to do that from time to time, as might be convenient to me. If you find it awkward to have me at Shore Acres, I'll be entirely willing to take Frances elsewhere."

"No, indeed; that is what Irma fears most of all. She feels that she has made a place where the child is safe. You understand her fear of kidnappers, blackmailers, journalists, and what not."

"Irma knows I did everything to help relieve those fears. But as Frances grows older I might feel that those restrictions were hampering her proper development. A human being has to be something more than a safe-deposit box for bonds."

Here was one of those unorthodox remarks which had caused a prince consort to be regarded with anxiety by the chairman of an investing trusteeship. But he didn't want to argue; he wanted to probe and find out what was in the mind of the man who possessed a fifty-per-cent. interest in the Barnes heiress, unfortunately named Budd. At somewhat needless length he explained that the members of the Barnes and Vandringham families were deeply concerned not merely because of their love for the child, but because she was their sole heir. Uncle Joseph hoped that Lanny would not take offence—

"No, no," said Lanny, a bit impatiently. "Tell me what else you have in mind."

"Irma desires to inquire whether there is any sum of money within reason which might induce you to let her have full control of Frances."

Lanny replied without hesitation: "There is no such sum. I would not sell my daughter." And then: "See here, Uncle Joseph, why do we have to be so mealy-mouthed? What is it that is worrying Irma? Is she afraid that Frances might some day come to agree

with my ideas instead of with hers? That is a chance that every parent has to take. If our children always thought exactly as we do, how would the world ever make any progress?"

This was a field of sociological speculation into which a grown-up messenger-boy had never ventured. He replied: "You must know, Lanny, the Barnes fortune is much more to Irma than just a lot of money. It is the heritage which her father left her and to which she owes a duty."

Lanny decided that the time had come for him to take the aggressive. "Tell me, is Irma thinking of marrying again?"

"There is always such a possibility to be thought of," answered the tactful negotiator.

"You will understand that my ideas about the child's future would be greatly clarified if I knew who is likely to become her stepfather."

"That is a matter about which I hope you won't insist on questioning me."

"Has Irma instructed you not to tell me?"

"Really, Lanny—" Joseph Barnes stopped short.

"I take it from your manner that she has. I don't know whether you are a minister plenipotentiary or merely an envoy, but I point out to you that I know Irma well and had an opportunity to observe her home-life only a short while ago. You can hardly blame me for wondering whether Frances's stepfather is going to be the Earl of Wickthorpe or Herr Forrest Quadratt."

"I can relieve part of your uncertainty at once. I assure you there is no chance of its being Herr Quadratt."

"So far so good; and now, how about Ceddy?"

"Without departing from my instructions"—here the old gentleman smiled—"will it be sufficient if you notice that I do not deny it might be Lord Wickthorpe?"

"Present my compliments to Irma and tell her that I discussed this excellent gentleman with my mother, a woman of the world whose judgment we all respect. She agrees that His Lordship would be an ideal person to cause Irma to forget her unhappy experiences with a man so unsocial, unco-operative, and uncordial as myself."

Joseph Barnes brightened, and summoned the courage to say: "I might point out to you that in thinking about the future of Frances, it would help us to know whether you contemplate presenting her with a stepmother."

"Your suggestion is quite reasonable, Uncle Joseph. You may tell Irma that since she left me to my own devices in the world I

have found myself enjoying the conversation of two ladies. But unfortunately there appears to be a husband in the way in both cases, so I am afraid our little daughter will have to get along without the luxury of a stepmother for a while."

III

Lanny went for a visit to Margy's place, where his mother had been resting from the labours of the season before taking a steamer for New York. He told her about the interview, and listened while she raged at the whole Barnes-Vandringham clan; then she said that she and her husband must go at once, so that little Frances might not forget the Budd-Dingle clan. She still couldn't make up her mind to let anybody but her intimate friends know about Lanny's impending calamity; as if the intimate friends hadn't already whispered it to *their* intimate friends! A couple of days later the New York papers reported the queen of all heiresses on the point of leaving for Reno—and of course all the world knows there is only one reason why anybody would ever leave for Reno. The story was cabled to London, and all the smart people within reach had it by their breakfast plates next morning; those who were in Scotland or Biarritz or Davos would receive it in due course, perhaps specially marked by some friend.

Lanny took his dethronement with good grace. He played tennis, rode Margy's fine horses, danced, or played bridge, and when anyone asked about the break-up he said: "Irma and I are different sorts of people." It happened that one of the leaders of the so-called Oxford group came for a house-party—so they called their sessions—and it was natural that he should give special attention to a playboy whose heart was presumed to be in a vulnerable condition; everybody hoped that Lanny might be "changed," and do what the group called "sharing"—that is, reveal what it was that he had done to drive his wife away. But the provoking fellow only listened and then told the story about the sinner who came home from one of these house-parties so changed that his dog bit him.

This new wave of religion had been started by an American named Buckman, and was now having some vogue in England. It had held sessions in Oxford and so had taken to calling itself the Oxford group, to the speechless indignation of academic circles in a staid university. But Buckman and his followers went blandly ahead to appropriate a historic name which carried great prestige. They followed a practice called God-guidance, listening to the inner voice

and doing what it told them ; as a rule the instructions appeared to be that they should go after the richest and most socially prominent persons in every country, and, having won their adherence, exploit their names for publicity purposes.

The voice had recently sent their founder to enrol prominent Germans, and he had come home exclaiming : " Thank God for Adolf Hitler ! " So now the Oxford and the Munich movements were rapidly assimilating, and noble ladies and gentlemen who met in one another's drawing-rooms and told publicly about their sexual errors and how God had rearmed them morally—these same titled persons opened their arms to Herr Ribbentrop, the Nazi champagne salesman, and heard him tell how a God-guided Führer had come to bring peace to Europe and a new order to all mankind.

IV

Lanny was interested to observe that Parsifal Dingle, his step-father, manifested little enthusiasm for these new spiritual exercises. Apparently God did not say the same things to a retired real-estate operator from Iowa as to the darlings of the smart world of London. Parsifal, like Lanny, listened politely, but when he was alone with his stepson he brought to memory an ancient injunction, that when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are : for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.

Madame Zyszynski was at Bluegrass, and some of the guests had become interested in experiments with her ; she, too, had acquired prestige, having been lent out to Zaharoff, Lady Caillard, and other wealthy persons. She remained quite unspoiled, having been brought up a servant and desiring nothing beyond that. She had been deeply touched by Parsifal's kindness, and was always happy to sit with him. Now he told Lanny about a series of revelations which he had been getting for the past month, supposed to come from a long-since deceased inmate of the Buddhist monastery of Dodanduwa in Ceylon. Parsifal had never read or heard anything about Ceylon that he could recall, and had no idea why the Bhikkhu Sinanayeke should have put the finger upon him from the other world. Parsifal was taking steps to find out if there had ever been such a monastery, and if it was still in operation he meant to write and inquire as to the correctness of the details.

Very curious, Lanny said. But his mind was on Spain these days, and he didn't suggest travelling to Ceylon to carry on psychic researches. He listened to elaborate notes concerning the ritual and daily life of very dark-skinned Aryans who wore cotton robes of saffron colour and bore long Tamil names; also to the details of various Buddhist hells, in which sinners were burned in roaring fires, dashed about by fierce winds, pierced by javelins, and otherwise bothered according to the gravity of their offences.

But then came a note which caused Lanny to sit up. The Bhikkhu Sinanayeke had inquired if Parsifal Dingle knew a man named Ludi. This man, according to the statement, insisted that he had once met Parsifal, but failed to say where.

"I know a Ludi," declared Lanny; "and what's more, I'm pretty sure that you have met him. I won't refresh your memory until you try again and see if your monkish friend can't bring the person into the light." Parsifal accepted the suggestion, and Lanny added: "Better if I don't attend, because you know how Tecumseh is when I'm about."

The trial was made, and Parsifal reported that his Ceylonese friend didn't know anything at all about Ludi, except that a spirit had called, saying he was Ludi looking for his wife. Apparently this strange dark realm was full of spirits wandering about—unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd—and whatever methods they used for communicating were no more perfect than those on earth. Certainly it indicated an unsatisfactory system of card-indexing when a commercial artist and Social-Democrat of Berlin, trying to find his wife, had to call to his aid a Ceylon Buddhist, a Polish widow, an Amerindian chieftain, and a former real-estate man from the corn and hog belt of the U.S.A.!

Every evening during Lanny's visit one of these séances was held and this strange fantasy continued; if the "Island Hermitage" at Dodanduwa was not real it was certainly well invented. The communications became direct; that is to say, Tecumseh was suppressed and the voice was that of the Bhikkhu, or mendicant monk. Lanny ventured to come in, and this caused no difficulty; the man of God talked with either of the Americans freely. When Lanny wanted to know if the monastery was still in existence, he said Yes, but now there were Gerinans, recent converts to Buddhism, who found it a pleasant place to live in but neglected their spiritual exercises.

Lanny, ever suspicious, inquired: "Might it not be that they are working at something else?"

The Bhikkhu replied: "That might be; they do not tell me."

"As to this Ludi," continued Lanny, "is he German?"

"He might be. Is it a German name?"

"Sometimes. Would he have come to you because of the Germans at the monastery?"

"I don't know why he came. I will try to find him." But he never did find him.

V

The dutiful son drove his mother to the steamer at Southampton and got her safely off, and then proceeded to Paris. The painting of the picture was done, all but the drying. It gave an odd effect, for the colours did not quite match and you could pick out each of the twelve round spots. But the clever girl said: "It was much worse yesterday; give it three or four days more." It was a kind of game, and she was quite excited about it; she had rarely had a more agreeable job, she told her client, for she felt physical pain when she saw a fine painting injured like that. "War is a wicked thing," she declared. "I am glad that we do not have it in France."

"Mademoiselle," replied Lanny, "while the house next door is blazing is hardly the time to congratulate one's self on safety." Again the girl looked as if she felt physical pain.

Lanny went to call on Trudi. It was the end of an unusually hot day and he invited her for a drive; they strolled several blocks away from her neighbourhood, to where he had parked his car. He drove out to the south-west, past Versailles and round towards the Château de Bruyne. He told about a French lady who had been his *amie* for six or seven years and taught him much. He told about Marie's husband, who had become Lanny's friend and Robbie's, and about the two sons whom Lanny was pledged to look after. There wasn't much he could do, for they had become French Fascists and he had to play a role with them.

"Lanny, how can you keep up a game like that?" exclaimed the woman.

He answered: "I have been doing it so many years that it has become a second nature. I am like an actor who plays Iago for two hours and a half in the evening, and the rest of the time plays Romeo, or Mercutio, or the melancholy Jaques, or Prospero the magician, or whatever the actor may be in his own private imagination."

"I have forgotten most of those characters," confessed Trudi. "The time when I went to the theatre seems like another life."

"I have just come from attendance at a strange drama," he told

her. "Whoever or whatever it is that works in the subconscious mind of Madame has been trying to outdo Shakespeare."

He described the ancient monastery on the palm-fringed shore of a hot moist land, and the fantastic theology and ritual which this almost black Aryan people had been evolving through some twenty-four centuries. "I can't find any mention of this island," he said. "It may be some small place in a river or harbour, or it may be entirely imaginary, like the numerous hells with complex terrors of which my stepfather has accumulated a list."

He repeated some of these fantastic descriptions, and the woman exclaimed: "Where do you suppose such nightmares come from?"

"Out of the bewilderment and terror of the race. Primitive men don't know much about the world they live in, and I imagine they know still less about their own minds. They have no way to tell reality from fantasy, and when one of them has had a dream, how is he to know whether or not he has been meeting angels and demons and lovely houris, or gods with two heads or six arms or whatever it may be!"

"But where does Madame get all that Buddhist stuff?"

"Parsifal has been reading endless mystical literature, and he may have read about Buddhist monasteries and hells and forgotten it—just as he had forgotten that he once met Ludi in Berlin."

"Ludi?" exclaimed the woman.

"I am leading up to that. Ludi chose this strange mishmash in which to insert himself again."

He told that part of the story and the woman listened with a mixture of emotions. "Lanny!" she exclaimed. "You wouldn't make up a thing like that?"

"It is natural for you to ask," he smiled. "But I assure you, what I can't get fairly in this world I will do without."

"I know; but you might think it was for my own good to stop my brooding over Ludi."

"I am treating you as an adult. You will choose your own destiny, and also you will make up your own mind about psychic phenomena. I tell you what happened, but I can't tell you why or how. I, of course, always have Ludi in mind, and I have convictions about him; it is possible that my mind injected him into the mind of the monk or into my stepfather's imaginings about the monk. The fascinating thing is that our minds appear to be all mixed up together, or at any rate they leak into one another, they explode and hurl fragments into one another. I don't know what it is, but I surely wish some scientific men would find out and tell me."

VI

They talked about the victim of the Nazis and his probable fate, and about the victim's wife or widow and her future. Trudi said again that she couldn't make up her mind that Ludi was dead, and couldn't face the grief she would feel if she did so decide. Lanny replied: "You think you can't face it, but the fact is you are facing it every day. Ordinary grief is something that one gets over in time—I know, because I had it in the case of Marie. I didn't know how I was ever going to live without her, but I learned to. In your case the uncertainty can last for ever; you renew your grief every day and so handicap your whole life. I think you ought to ask yourself whether Ludi would wish you to go on like that."

"Probably he wouldn't, Lanny, but what am I to do? Suppose I were to decide that he was dead, and then some day he came back?"

"It is a well-known narrative poem by Tennyson. Enoch Arden looked in at the window and saw the happiness of his wife, and went away so as not to disturb it."

"Yes, but Ludi will be ill and will need me. He may not be any more able to go away than Freddi Robin was."

"Ludi is no Victorian sailor, but a sensible modern man; he would not expect you to mutilate your life on such a slender chance. He knows that you know about the Nazi fiends, and how many comrades they have tortured to death and thrown into sandpits."

"But, if he came back, what should I do?"

"Be sensible, Trudi. You know that if Ludi turned up I'd be just as anxious to help him as you, and I *would* help him—in whatever way was needed. If that meant stepping aside and leaving you to him, I would do it. You would be the one to decide, and certainly I wouldn't make a fuss about it, any more than I'm doing in the case of Irma."

He told her story of his interview with the ambassador uncle, and to Trudi it was a glimpse into another fabulous world. She took the view of the economic determinist. "I suppose that so much money automatically makes people selfish."

Lanny explained: "It has gradually become clear to me what has been going on in Irma's mind. I believe she has had it for several years, ever since she first met a certain English earl at one of the League of Nations affairs in Geneva. There was the man she wished she had married. When she saw his splendid old castle she

became fired by the idea of putting in modern plumbing, with bathtubs built into the floor like swimming-pools, lined with green marble and having little red electric lights to illuminate each step. In Shore Acres Irma's fixtures are of solid gold and mine are of silver; this gave her father feelings of great splendour, and Irma inherited both fixtures and feelings. Naturally, she finds my mother's old home on the Riviera a cheap and shoddy place. She has no room to entertain there, and so what is the good of having all that money?"

"Lanny, I think that people like that are wicked, wicked!"

"Irma is the daughter of a man who saw what he wanted and went and took it. She admires him and is following his example. She will modernize the castle, add a half-million-dollar ballroom, perhaps a million-dollar sports building. She will entertain extensively and acquire standing as an intellectual. For seven years she has been training and equipping herself to preside over a salon, as she has seen an old friend of mine doing here in Paris. Irma will adopt the ideas of her new husband, and make her home the headquarters of that wing of the Tory party which desires peace and hopes to get it by some sort of deal with Hitler. Her goal will be to have her husband retire from the Foreign Office and become Foreign Minister. You can see how much more glorious this is than being the wife of a peddler of old paintings, and why her family and friends all thought she was throwing herself away on a second-rate personality."

Lanny was bitter, in spite of all his smiles!

VII

It was hard to think about art, love, or psychic research in the madhouse which Paris had now become. No one who cared about political questions could talk or think about anything but the Spanish war, and the newspapers carried on a propaganda war in their columns, accusing their opponents of the most atrocious crimes. General Franco's armies had begun moving northwards along the Portuguese border, and on the fourteenth of August, 1936, he took Badajoz, effecting a juncture with the armies of General Mola coming southwards. The taking of this small city was celebrated by crowding four thousand prisoners into the bullring, locking the gates, and then blasting them with machine-guns.

When the news of this horror reached Paris, the forces of the Front Populaire went wild. The Rightist press, of course, said it was

all a Red lie ; they adopted the regular Fascist tactics of denying everything and turning the accusations against the Reds, charging that they had committed such crimes and were trying to conceal them by a smoke-screen. So the war of charge and countercharge went on, in print and over the air, at public meetings and wherever one Frenchman met another. Rick's saying that class had become more than country found its complete vindication, for the Rightist press of Paris was calling upon Adolf Hitler to keep France from selling arms to the Spanish government.

Italian troops were pouring into Seville, and Italian and German planes, tanks, and artillery were coming to Franco by way of Spanish Morocco and Portugal. The troops were all "volunteers," of course, and that farce was going to be maintained by a solid block of reactionary gentlemen throughout the civilized world: the aristocracy, the bankers and big industrialists, the two hundred families who ruled France, the heads of the armies and navies, and the hierarchy of the Church. The duly elected people's government of Spain furnished a pattern of procedure to the discontented masses everywhere ; their suppression was necessary to the survival of the established order, and Mussolini and Hitler were the boys who were going to do the job. Persons who understood the modern world could see in this Spanish struggle the line-up and preliminary skirmishes of a world-wide civil war.

Hitherto in international relationships it had been the firmly established law that all governments had the right to buy arms for their own defence and that neutrality forbade the supplying of arms to rebels. But now the safety of the ruling classes depended upon reversing this custom overnight, and it was done. History's most astonishing example of organized hypocrisy—so the Pomeroy-Nielson family had agreed in calling it, and Lanny and Trudi in Paris found no reason to change the phrase. Trudi had received from some underground source a pamphlet being distributed among the workers in Germany ; the Nazis had known everything that was coming and had got ready in advance, with pictures of the shooting of priests, the looting of church treasure, and nuns being raped by ferocious Spanish and Jewish Reds. Here was proof positive of that Jewish-Bolshevik world conspiracy which an inspired Führer had warned against. Trudi, agonizing over this mess of falsehood, had prepared an answer, giving the German workers facts which they would never see in any newspaper or hear over any radio in the Fatherland. When Lanny went to call on her, it was this that she wanted to talk about, not art, or love, or psychic research. Lanny said : " Yes, that is excellent. I will get the money for it."

VIII

Lanny Budd's most bitter disappointment in this crisis was Léon Blum. The people's leader failed most tragically. A week after the attack on Spain, the French Cabinet forbade arms shipments to the imperilled country. That was called a measure of non-intervention, but obviously it was the opposite; it was abrogating international law for the benefit of international gangsters. After hesitating another week Blum called for an agreement among all the interested nations that none of them would supply armaments to either side. So began weeks of dickering, and then months of lying and cheating which took the heart out of every lover of justice. Blum would keep his pledges, while Hitler and Mussolini laughed at theirs. Who stands to gain when an honest man makes a bargain with thieves?

It was as Lanny had feared, a bibliophile and aesthete wasn't the sort for a job like this; he was a polite and gentle victim in the hands of the toughest bullies. They united against him, they browbeat him and raged at him until they broke his nerve. Lanny tried to see him, but he was too busy—and perhaps didn't want to face any of his old friends of the Left. His own paper repudiated his policy, and those who had fought hardest to elect him were full of bitterness and despair.

Lanny, knowing the inside of affairs, could understand his dreadful plight. There he was, a Jew, with his reactionary Cabinet members, some of them hired by the enemy, threatening to resign; his domestic policy, upon which all his hopes were centred, brought near to ruin. The British Tories had told him that he could expect no support from that quarter; the entire French Right was shrieking at him that if he got into that war they would make it a civil war. He couldn't even depend upon the generals in his own Army; many of them were ready to do what Franco had done, and there might be Fascist armies marching on Paris as on Madrid. He had an ally in the Soviet Union, but that was eight or nine hundred miles away, with Hitler and Mussolini threatening to close the gap. The poor man was so crushed that he didn't even dare discuss a military convention to implement the Russian alliance.

Lanny went to visit his Red uncle, to find out what the Russians were going to do in this crisis. He had to listen to a lecture and a moral homily; almost it seemed that the righteous indignation of Jesse Blackless was partly turned to satisfaction because his Leninist

thesis was being so completely vindicated. "You picked out your perfect Socialist politician and elected him—and he hasn't been in office three months before he deserts his party and puts himself into the hands of the capitalist class!"

Lanny, repelled by extremism, of course had to take the other side. "You have just heard Blum announce to the Chamber the complete fulfilment of his domestic programme, every single promise he made to the electorate."

"Oh, yes!" jeered the Communist deputy. "He has swept the floors, he has dusted the furniture, he has made the beds in all the upstairs rooms—while below stairs incendiaries have been setting fires and pouring petrol on them!"

"I admit it's very short-sighted, Uncle Jesse——"

"It's a deliberate closing of his middle-class eyes, because he cannot face what he sees. He has to choose between Communism and Fascism, and he cannot make up his mind, so he lets the enemy choose for him—and for France!"

Jesse Blackless was going to one of his *réunions*, where he would make a fiery speech, and his audience would sing the *Internationale* and shout: "*Les soviets partout!*" He invited his nephew, but Lanny pleaded a previous engagement. That was true—and anyhow, he was sick about what was happening, and couldn't bring himself to listen to any more stories of workers and intellectuals in Spain being slaughtered in cold blood.

IX

Lanny owed a duty to the de Bruynes; their feelings would be hurt if he came to town and didn't see them. Charlot had just got married, and Lanny had to meet the bride. He drove out to the château for dinner and spent the night. Both the young men had installed their families in the old home—they were not so used to having their own way as American families, and whatever friction might occur they would take as a part of living. Denis, the father, had never remarried; he had his peculiar love-life which he carried on in Paris, and the rest of the family either didn't know about it or pretended not to.

Three Frenchmen talked politics and one American listened. It had been years since Lanny had made any attempt to influence the two sons to what he considered liberal ideas; he had come to realize that it was hopeless, and that if he should succeed, he would be making a family split. The American took refuge in his ivory

tower ; he was the art connoisseur, and incidentally one who made a magnificent living out of it and had adventures which made him good company whenever he came along. Now he had been to Spain and seen the beginning of the Franco crusade ; he would tell what he had seen, confining himself to facts and drawing no conclusions. He had seen the great Church of Santa Ana burning. "*Oh, les sales cochons*—they burned every church in Barcelona, excepting the Cathedral !" This happened to be true, unlike most of the beliefs the family held. Lanny said nothing about arms being stored in crypts or heavy masonry being used as fortifications.

Take all the ideas of the Blackless family and turn them inside out and you had the ideas of the de Bruyne family. Both families despised Léon Blum—the de Bruynes for what he was doing and the Blacklesses for what he was neglecting to do. A cousin of Denis had recently been chosen as one of the twelve members of the Conseil de Régence, the governing board of the Banque de France, that mighty institution which had been founded by Napoleon and had governed French finance and therefore French public life for more than a century. Now a Jew with his so-called reforms was depriving this ancient and honourable body of its powers, insisting that the great Banque should be governed by the majority vote of its stockholders, more than forty thousand of them. It was a part of what the French were calling *le New Deal*, and Denis hated the French version exactly as Robbie hated the American.

It wasn't just their money, nor yet their prestige ; it was their culture, their ideals, their Catholic religion, everything they lived for that was threatened. They saw cruel despotism arising in Eastern Europe, based upon scepticism, upon the mob spirit, upon proletarian force, upon everything that was fatal to old aristocratic France. This evil power appeared to be burning like a volcanic fire deep under the soil of Europe ; now and then it burst out in a fresh place, choking the land with sulphurous fumes—the fire department had to be rushed there in a hurry.

Uncle Jesse had said that Blum couldn't choose between Communism and Fascism. Well, the de Bruynes had chosen, and without hesitation. Both Denis, *fils*, and his brother Charlot had had military training, and both were ready to use it, not in the service of their country, but in the service of their class. If Léon Blum continued to let volunteers sneak into Spain and carry arms to be used against Catholic General Franco, the two brothers were prepared to take up arms against Blum. They were not afraid of the possibility of being attacked by Hitler while such a civil war was in progress ; on the contrary, they envisioned a happy confederation

of Germany, Italy, France, and Spain, all serving as brothers-in-arms against the Jewish Bolsheviks.

It was Charlot, bearing on his face an honourable scar earned in the class war, who outlined this vision. Lanny smiled rather sadly, and said: "Are you sure you can trust the Führer? You know, he wrote in his book that the safety of Germany requires the annihilation of France."

"He wrote that a long time ago," replied the younger man. "Politicians often change their minds, and we have the best assurance on this point."

Lanny wanted to ask: "What assurance?" but he thought it the part of wisdom to wait. The subject was changed, and before long the young devotee of the Croix de Feu remarked: "By the way, did you know that your friend Kurt Meissner is in Paris?"

"Really?" said Lanny. "Why didn't he let me know?"

"He said he intended to. He asked about you very kindly."

"How did you come to meet him?"

"He gave a recital at the home of the Duc de Belleaumont."

That was the palace which Irma had rented for a year, in order to launch herself in French society; so Lanny had no difficulty in visioning a scene of great elegance. "Did Kurt play his own compositions?" he inquired, and they talked about these for a while. Lanny was content to wait for the item of information he wanted.

Presently the older brother remarked: "We had a little chat with him. You should ask him to tell you about Hitler and his attitude towards France. He knows the Führer intimately, you know."

"Yes, of course," replied Lanny casually. "Kurt would know, if anybody."

So it is that secret agents check up on other secret agents. It is known as "counter-espionage."

X

Lanny had to see Kurt, if only to keep from giving offence and awakening suspicions. Lanny hadn't been to Germany in a year, and felt that he would never care to go again; but he knew that circumstances might make him change his mind and it was wisest to keep his German connections unimpaired. He had got Kurt's address from Emily, and next morning he called up Kurt and

invited him to lunch. Lanny mentioned that he had recently been in Spain, and of course Kurt wanted to hear all about it; Lanny told it objectively, as he had done with the French family.

"You see," said the German, "what comes of letting the mob have its way. That poor country has been drifting into chaos, year after year. Now there has to be a surgical operation, and it will be painful."

"I suppose so," replied Lanny submissively. "I have come to realize that the problem is too complicated for me. I am taking your advice and being an art lover. I was fortunate to get out with a valuable painting—and twice fortunate to have it well repaired."

So he turned the subject away. Kurt would be sorry for his boyhood friend, considering him a weakling, which perhaps he was; the older man had always taken that patronizing attitude, but still retained his feelings of affection, realizing that Lanny was what circumstances had made him. Americans were an easy-going and self-indulgent people, especially those who had been born to wealth and ease. The Germans were different; rich or poor, they were taught to work; and now, having a glorious leader, they worked in a state of ever-renewed inspiration. So thought the one-time artillery officer turned composer, and when he played his thunderous music he was leading the *Herrenvolk* in their march of destiny into the new world order. Lanny understood this, and was willing to have it so.

Presently Kurt said: "What's this I hear about you and Irma getting divorced?"

"It was no go, Kurt," replied the other. "We have been unable to agree for years. Irma dislikes Europe intensely; but I have my home here, and nearly all my friends. I can't stand her fashionable set with their empty minds. Irma's uncle has been in London to arrange matters with me—and, believe it or not, he collects old half-dime novels, stories about detectives and cowboys and Indians which he used to read when he was a boy; you can't imagine what trash it is—there is nothing like it in Germany."

There was something like it in Germany, and Lanny had been on the verge of saying: "Such stuff as Karl May writes." But something in his quick mind had flashed him a warning. Karl May was the favourite author of Adolf Hitler, and from his enormous output of sensational fiction the Führer had got most of his impressions of life in America. That would have been a "boner," indeed, and an amateur secret agent thought to himself: "I must learn not to talk so much!"

XI

Lanny had always been interested in Kurt's musical compositions, and now when he asked about them Kurt offered to play for him. They went to the composer's apartment, and Lanny listened and admired dutifully, as he had always done. Incidentally he observed the place, and noticed a shaven-headed Prussian manservant who looked like an S.S. drill sergeant and who watched the American guest with covert attention.

They talked about the Führer, the most interesting and important topic in the world. Kurt had been to see him recently and had been honoured by his confidences. Lanny had heard a report that the Führer had called in a facial surgeon and had his somewhat bulbous nose reduced, in order to make him more worthy of that immortality he was planning; but Kurt didn't mention this and Lanny didn't ask. He didn't say anything about the recent decree increasing the term of military training from one year to two, thus at one stroke doubling the size of the future German Army. He didn't say anything about the rate at which the Siegfried Line was being rushed to completion, so that Germany could count herself impregnable on the west.

No, Kurt talked about the magnificent new buildings which Adi was erecting in both Berlin and Munich; he had planned every detail himself. "An extraordinary man," declared the Kompomist, and the art expert replied: "There has never been one like him." There might have been a *double entendre* in this, but Kurt would not suspect this.

"The whole aspect of the world has changed for me," he declared. "You know what a broken man I was at the end of the Peace Conference here in Paris; but now I have hope and courage—and the same thing is true of every man and woman in Germany. The Führer has given me the promise of realizing those dreams which you and I talked about when we were boys. Do you remember?"

"Indeed I do, Kurt. We sat up on the height by the Church of Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Port, and we were ready to re-mould this sorry scheme of things entire."

"Well, it is going to be done now; there will be a new internationalism, with peace and order to last a thousand years. There is a new religion being born in Germany, and you ought to be one of the first to understand it and help to spread it. You saw so clearly the

inequities of the Versailles *Diktat*—why don't you see now what the Führer is doing, not merely to rectify them, but to bring all the nations together and prevent another wasteful war ? ”

The question was put up to Lanny straight, and he had to find an answer. “ I don't know,” he said. “ I guess the world has been too much for me, and I've rather run away from the problem of late years. You've come out of your ivory tower and I've gone back into mine. I've persuaded myself that I'm rendering a service to America by collecting examples of the best taste of Europe, so they can some day be the means of starting new art movements in that crude and materialistic nation. I have seen a few signs that my efforts may not be entirely wasted.”

Such was the style of conversation which Lanny had adopted, not merely with Kurt, but with most of the fashionable persons he met. He had invented it at the time he was trying to save the Robin family, and he had found it equally satisfactory to the smart worlds of Berlin, Paris, and London. Kurt, more subtle than the rest, would suspect Lanny's sincerity when he said he was trying to uplift America ; Kurt would be sure that what Lanny was doing was making money so that he could live the life of Beauty's smart friends. Kurt knew this life intimately because he had been in the midst of it for eight years as Beauty's lover. He would think that Lanny was hopeless, but he would stay on friendly, even intimate, terms with him, in order to use him for the purposes of Kurt's inspired Führer.

Lanny would stay on intimate terms with Kurt, in order to watch the Nazis and know how they worked, what patter they were using. Lanny would make a mockery of friendship, of music and art and all the fine and noble emotions which these were supposed to generate ; he would do it because Kurt was doing it, and he had to fight the devil with fire. Kurt would go into the ornate Empire drawing-room of the Duc de Bell'auumont which had been Lanny's for a year, and there play the music he had composed in his repressed but fiery youth. Because he was or had been an artist he could still feel those emotions—but now always for a purpose, so that he could lure the duc and duchesse into trust of Nazism, and thus prepare a civil war which would leave France at the mercy of her ancient deadly foe. Every note that Kurt played and every word that he spoke—the noblest and most inspiring words, peace and order and justice, appeasement and international security—all these would become poison for French veins and bear-traps for French feet. Such was old Europe and its culture ! . .

24

True Faith of an Armourer

I

ZOLTAN had gone back to Biarritz to consult with one of his clients; now he returned, inspected the Comendador, and pronounced him completely cured. There was a smooth new canvas at the back of the picture, and in front the surface was level and the paints so well matched that no one could possibly tell where the holes had been. The older and more experienced man said: "Don't try to sell this painting by mail, because no one will believe how good it is. Let them see it, and invite them to guess where the holes are before you show them the photographs."

That would mean a trip to New York and perhaps to other places. Lanny had been thinking about it, for now while Irma was in Reno would be a pleasant time to spend with Frances. He said: "I'm thinking of asking twenty-five thousand dollars. I have a reason for wanting that much."

"You may get it," Zoltan replied; "but perhaps not at the first try. You may find someone who would like to have a painting with a story attached to it."

"I have my victims already picked out; my plateglass friends in Pittsburgh, the Harry Murchisons. I sold them a Goya and a Velasquez, and they have made themselves quite a reputation with those works. Their business is picking up again and they ought to have plenty of cash."

Lanny sent a cablegram to this couple, saying that he had something special to show them, and in due course he received a reply that they were at their camp in the Adirondacks, a pleasant day's drive from New York. They would welcome him with open arms, they said, and he guessed this meant that they had heard the sad news about Irma. He engaged steamer passage—it was the time of year when tourists were flocking back to their homeland, but he managed to get a berth in a state-room with another man. He cabled his mother and father that he was coming, also Fanny Barnes. He bought a handsome old Spanish frame for the large painting and had it carefully packed in a box put together with bolts. He hired a

station-wagon to drive him and the treasure to Le Havre, for he wasn't going to take chances of any more mishaps to that old gentleman with the delicate constitution.

II

Lanny went to call on Trudi and tell her his plans. He couldn't say how long he would be gone, but it would be a month at least. He was taking an old master and hoping to exchange it for a specimen of the very newest model of the Budd-Erling pursuit plane. They were continually being improved in speed and firepower, and this was number nine ; it was unlikely that Göring's Condor Legion would have anything to match it, and quite impossible that Musso lini would. Lanny had a letter from Alfy, saying that he and his chum, Laurence Joyce, were in a training-school perfecting their flying technique. Lanny said : " I'll ship that plane to Paris and let them fly it to Madrid."

It was going to be needed. Lanny had a letter from Raoul, who had been summoned to Madrid to aid in a press department set up by the new government. He was frantic because of the action of the French Cabinet in keeping this government from getting arms. The war had settled down to a sort of siege of the central and eastern parts of the country, the rebel troops holding the greater part of a circle, on the south, the west, and the north. The outcome would depend upon supplies from abroad, and so the diplomatic and political struggle was crucial.

The Spanish government had plenty of money ; not merely gold in its vaults in Madrid, but also in the Banque de France and other capitals. It had standing contracts with arms-manufacturing concerns in France ; but these concerns, now nationalized by act of the Blum government, would not be permitted to fulfil their contracts. The British government likewise had forbidden the export of arms to Spain. Meanwhile the Italians and the Germans were sending shiploads, and when the warships of Spain stopped these vessels and searched them, the Nazi and Fascist newspapers raved at what they called acts of piracy !

Lanny had left Spain under the impression that the battle was about won ; that it would take only a few weeks to drive out the invaders and restore order. But now he saw that it was going to be a long and bloody struggle, and he feared greatly for the outcome. The ruling classes of Europe had picked Franco as their man, and they meant to put him in. How many lives it cost and how much

misery was nothing to them, for their grip upon the old continent was at stake. Lanny divined that it was going to be another of those sickening tragedies which he was fated to watch; first Il Duce, then Der Führer, and now El Caudillo—each wading through slaughter to a throne.

III

It was hard for two dreamers of social justice to think about their own affairs in the midst of events such as these. But people have to eat and sleep, even while battles and sieges are going on, while disappointments and defeats are being suffered. Lanny said: "I have several families across the water and I'm always glad to see them; but I'll be thinking about you, Trudi, and how lonely you must be."

"I am pretty lonely," she responded. "But whenever I have an impulse to brood, I remember those poor comrades in the concentration camps. I try to think of some new way to help them."

"Every day I live, Trudi, I perceive more clearly that ours is going to be a long hard fight. We have to plan our lives for that—not for a few weeks or months, but perhaps for a lifetime."

"Oh, Lanny!" she exclaimed, her voice low and trembling. They were sitting by the one window of the little attic studio, watching the twilight settle upon the roof-tops and the innumerable chimney-pots of Paris. There was still light enough for him to see that there were tears in her eyes, something which happened frequently when he broached that tragic theme. She knew it was true, but she couldn't get used to the thought.

"Every time I go away," he said, "I wonder if you will be here when I get back, or if you will break under the strain of living like this."

"What else can I do, Lanny?"

"You know what I mean, dear." He tried to think how best to make approaches to a saint. "I cannot see what harm you and I should be doing to any person in the world if we allowed ourselves a little happiness as we go along. It might be that it would take something from the intensity of what you write; but if it caused you to last longer, the sum total of your accomplishment might be greater."

He said it with a smile, as was his habit, and she who found it so hard to smile had to get used to that way of taking

life. "Lanny, do you really think I am the woman to give you happiness?"

"Understand that I have thought it over carefully, and for a long time. Even in Berlin I realized that I wasn't hitting it off with Irma, and I found myself asking: 'What sort of woman is this Trudi, and how would she and I make out?'"

"What did you answer?"

"For one thing, I decided that here was the truest character and the clearest mind that I had come upon in a woman."

"That is very pleasant to hear, and it counts for a lot; but it isn't everything. Do you realize that you have never once said that you love me?"

"What sort of man would I be if I made love to you after you had told me that your heart was pledged and your thoughts were fixed on your husband? I should only be worrying you, imposing upon you, adding to your burdens. I don't mean to let myself do any of those things."

"I am trying to understand you, Lanny. Have you always had such complete control of your feelings?"

"Not always; but now I am old enough to know myself and my needs. You and I have both been married, and we can talk on the basis of facts. I have decided, for my part, that the basis of happiness in love is congeniality and mutual trust. The rest will follow easily enough."

"Just what would you like me to do, Lanny?"

"I will say it in the plainest words. I should like you to make up your mind that you are a widow. When you have once said that, I promise to leave you in no doubt whatever about my wishes and feelings."

There was a long silence. Lanny sat looking at Trudi, and she looked over the roof-tops. Finally she said: "Give me the time while you are gone. I will think it over and try to settle it in my own mind."

"All right," he replied, "it's a date." He took her hand, held it for a few moments, and kissed it gently.

"Tell me," she said, "about those families in America, so that I can imagine you while you are away."

"Right now I have six of them," he smiled, "my mother and her husband, my father and his family, my daughter and her grandmother, Bess and her husband, Marceline and hers, and finally the Robin family—I don't know just what their relationship is, but it must be something. If you ever tie up with me you will have to learn a lot of birthday dates!"

IV

The car was to be stored in Paris, partly because its owner was learning to economize and partly because he couldn't carry the Comendador in it. He rode to Le Havre in the hired station-wagon, a vehicle of American manufacture now coming into popularity. On board the luxurious steamship he enjoyed the society of a stoutish gentleman who manufactured lead pencils in a small town of Ohio. He had been seeing Europe with two aspiring daughters who had another cabin; apparently they knew all about Lanny Budd's marital tragedy, and hoped that he would tell one or both of them about it. The father enjoyed playing poker, which meant that he came to bed very late and slept late; at other times he talked about the presidential campaign which now was exciting all Americans. The Republicans had put up a Kansas oil man, and he was trying to appear as "liberal" as Roosevelt. The pencil man thought it was a great mistake, for what the American people wanted was to be let alone by reformers and cranks. Lanny got away from him and read books and magazines, studied the ship's bulletins as to the progress of General Franco's armies, and paced the deck thinking about a new-born democratic government being strangled in its cradle.

The two grandmothers came to the pier, bringing Frances to meet her father. This was intended to sound a keynote of peace. In spite of all rivalries and jealousies the two ladies were going to play bridge together, and pretend that the tragedy was perfectly normal, respectable, and not especially important. Lanny was being ousted from Irma's bed, but not from her board; indeed, while she was away he would occupy his accustomed suite with the pedigreed four-poster bed and the massive shiny plumbing fixtures; he would have the run of the place, the use of cars and horses and playgrounds, and be waited upon with promptness and cordiality by the servants. In short, he was still royalty. He wondered if it would have been the same if he had been so ill advised as to accede to Joseph Barnes's proposal and let Irma have the sole custody of the child!

Four months had passed, and the little one was bigger, brighter, more full of words and curiosities. She couldn't take her eyes off this wonderful, almost legendary father. She had been told that he had been in a strange far-off country where there was a war, and that a bullet from an aeroplane had passed within an inch of his elbow. It

was almost too exciting for six and a half years ; he had to tell it at once, and again at every bedtime. Two elderly ladies had to resign themselves to taking two large back seats for the time ; for nature begins at the beginning, and sees to it that the female creature admires, adores, and craves the company of the male—even when later on she will eat him up !

V

The Comendador had been taken into the custody of the United States government and was in the Appraisers' Stores. Lanny drove to town next day in a station-wagon and made the required affidavit to the effect that the picture was an " original work of art painted by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes, approximately in the year 1785." Such an importation being not liable to duty, a brief inspection sufficed. So Lanny drove home with his treasure, and the servants carried it in, unscrewed the bolts, and took it out of the packing-box. Another picture was removed temporarily and the new treasure was hung in the drawing-room in what Lanny said was a proper light, and all the family gathered to inspect it. Really, a most distinguished thing, and many friends would appreciate an opportunity to view it, declared Fanny Barnes.

Her secretary got busy on the telephone, and all that evening the neighbours and friends were streaming in. A pity the old Comendador couldn't be there to share the honours ; even the sour and embittered painter might have appreciated it. He would have found the company distinguished and the costumes exotic, and would have been delighted by the modern coal-tar dyes. Lanny discovered that he had created a fascinating topic of conversation : Where were the bullet holes ? He had to tell the story over and over, and people would think they could see them but really couldn't, and they would challenge one another—it became a regular guessing-game. One would say : " Too bad it had to be such an ugly old man ! " Then he would think that maybe he had proved himself a booby, and would add something about the brilliance of the colours. Many wanted to know the price, and when Lanny told them they said : " Whew ! " But they were impressed, and more than one remarked : " If your plateglass friends don't take it, give us a chance." Lanny thought : " Am I pricing it too low ? "

He was going to see his other families in the morning, and take the treasure along. He suggested hiring a station-wagon in the village, but Fanny said : " Oh, don't think of it ! We have three

on the place, and one can be spared without the slightest trouble. Take it for your own until you have sold the picture, and then take a car." He saw what she meant : for him to go outside for anything would indicate that he was an outsider, and would create a scandal. Once royalty, always royalty—that was the law, and never must he do or say anything that would reduce his rank or impair his dignity.

He understood that in accepting this arrangement he was putting himself somewhat into the hands of the Barnes family ; he was accepting favours and thereby binding himself. But he never wished to do anything to hurt them, so he would go on playing the game according to their rules. " Call me Mother, just as if nothing had happened," Fanny had whispered when they had first met. " Frances mustn't notice any change." A well-mothered man he had always been, and now he had four of them within a big gun's range : Mother Beauty Dingle, Mother Fanny Barnes, Mother Esther Budd, and Mother Leah Robin !

VI

At the Budd home in Newcastle they killed the fatted calf. They felt that he hadn't been fairly treated by his wife, and they wished to cheer him up. A relief to discover that he was already cheered. The Comendador was unbolted once more and properly hung, and then began another and bigger reception : members of the huge Budd tribe, also the Robin family, and Hansi and Bess. The news spread quickly, and the throngs increased, many of them strangers, begging permission on the ground that they were art lovers. Robbie Budd, always a great one for spoofing, remarked : " Look here, Lanny, you've got the grandest prize puzzle ever devised. Don't tell anybody where the bullet holes are and you'll have the whole town sitting up nights arguing." Presently he began to see further possibilities, and said to his serious and conscientious wife : " Esther, it's a gold mine for your church ! "

The daughter of the Puritans was never sure when her husband was teasing her, and she asked : " How do you mean ? "

" Have a raffle, and sell guesses at five dollars a shot, and give part of the pool to the person who comes nearest to spotting the twelve bullet holes. Get a lot of photographs of the painting and let each person put pinholes through where he thinks the bullets went, and sign his name on the back, and then the judges will award the prize. It's a dead certainty for money-making, and absolutely legal—it's not a game of chance but of skill, and the lottery laws

can't touch it. That's the way to support the unemployed of this town ! ”

Esther wasn't sure whether he meant it, and presently Robbie wasn't sure himself ; for when he told it to people they said : “ Why not ? ” They fell to arguing in front of the picture, and when they asked Lanny and he delayed answering, they began backing their opinions with private bets.

Robbie's imagination took flight, for he was a business man and an advertiser, and ways to make money and publicity were his specialty. He saw this painting becoming a nation-wide sensation ; some great institution would take it up—say, a chain of newspapers—and use it to make money for charity and at the same time to advertise the chain. The newspapers would furnish a colour-process reproduction and tell all about Goya, and the Spanish war, and Lanny's strange adventure. They would exhibit the painting in a string of cities all the way across the continent, and crowds of people would file by, each having five minutes in which to make up his mind and put his pinholes through the newspaper facsimile. When it was all over, the millions of marked copies would be run through a photo-electric machine which would automatically pick out the perfect guesses—if there were any. Thus the prizes would be awarded without any chance of favouritism.

“ That's got everything it takes for a knock-out ! ” chuckled this wide-awake promoter. “ It's got art, and history, and adventure ; it involves socially prominent people, and it would win a million new readers for the newspaper chain that took it up ! Take my advice and let them try it, and afterwards you can sell the painting for half a million dollars ! ”

Lanny said : “ Bring on your newspaper owner.”

VII

The art expert told his father in confidence what he had paid for this old master, and Robbie said that was about the best deal he had ever heard of ; Lanny's repute rose astronomically. “ What are you going to do with all that money ? ” inquired the father. “ Take my advice and put it into Budd-Erling stock.”

“ I want to put it into Budd-Erling products,” replied the son. “ I'm hoping you'll let me have a couple of Number Nines at cost.”

“ What on earth do you want with Number Nines ? ”

“ Alfy and his chum Laurence are taking a training-course and

are going to volunteer in the service of the Spanish government. I want to be sure they have the best planes to fly."

The light went out of Robbie Budd's countenance as from a bulb when you turn a switch. "My God, Lanny, you don't mean such a thing!"

"I surely do. They say that somebody has got to match Mussolini's and Hitler's volunteers."

"Lanny, that's the most dreadful thing I ever heard in my life. Have those young people gone stark mad?"

So the pair went into an argument: the same old argument they had been having for nearly twenty years and that never got anywhere. Lanny told what he knew about Spain, and Robbie told what he had read in the Hearst newspapers, which had launched an all-out campaign against the so-called Red government of Madrid. In the column of Arthur Brisbane, most highly paid newspaper editor in the world, Robbie had read about "nuns soaked in oil and burned," and he believed it. What was the use of Lanny's trying to tell him about churches turned into arsenals by a priesthood turned into landlords and bankers? What was the use of trying to explain to the president of Budd-Erling that the Catholic Church of Spain was not quite the same thing as the Congregational Church of Connecticut? No use whatever, for Robbie believed what his business interests taught him must be true.

The manufacturer was in the midst of the same civil war himself; the same forces were lined up at home, and he was the Juan March or the Zaharoff of New England. The war upon the New Deal had flamed to heat like that of an "oxflame" torch; the Hearst newspapers were assailing Roosevelt in the same columns and with much the same charges as they brought against the Spanish Loyalists. The Roosevelt administration was in alliance with the Communists and was waging the campaign on Communist issues. Arthur Brisbane didn't charge that the New Dealers had soaked any nuns in oil and burned them—not yet; but that was what the Reds meant to do all over the world, and That Man in the White House was bowing them into power.

Robbie had convinced himself, as he always did, that his crowd was going to carry the election; he had put up a lot of money for it, and was being asked for more and more, and was hounding his friends at the country club to increase their allotments. And here he had to sit and listen to his first-born son defending these triplets of destruction; the New Deal of Washington which had hiked income taxes of the rich to the point of

confiscation, *le New Deal* of Paris which had nationalized the munitions industry, and *el New Deal* of Madrid which had forced the landlords to divide up their estates with the peasants !

VIII

The culmination of this argument was one full of dismay for an amateur sociologist. His father wouldn't sell Budd-Erling planes to the Spanish government, nor would he sell them to anybody who was going to turn them over to the Spanish government. Even if he were willing to go against his conscience, he hadn't the right to sacrifice the interests of his stockholders. The company would be boycotted by the governments of the world if its planes were to appear with the Red label on them !

"But, Robbie !" exclaimed the greatly shocked son, "you are furnishing planes to Franco ! It amounts to that when you sell to Göring, who is sending shiploads of munitions by way of Portugal every week !"

"He may be sending Budd-Erlings, but I have no knowledge of it."

"Are you making any attempt to get knowledge ? Have you mentioned the subject to him ?"

Lanny, persisting, brought out the point clearly : his father recognized the Nazi government of Germany as a legitimate government, entitled to purchase arms in America ; but he refused to recognize the government of Spain as a government in any sense whatever.

"But, Robbie, the Spanish government was chosen in a fair and free election, after a long and open campaign such as we have in America ! The Hitler government was approved in an imbecile farce held after all the opposition leaders had been murdered or jailed, and when only one ticket was permitted and no opposition voice was allowed to be raised ! How can you, an American, approve the Nazi gangsters and repudiate a whole people struggling out of medieval darkness ?"

"There's no use arguing, son. I have my convictions, and my duties as a citizen and a director of industry. I have to act according to my understanding."

"All right, but I think you ought to know what you are doing to your son. All my lifetime, ever since I was old enough to listen, I have heard you defending the munitions industry and yourself as a salesman, and always I have heard one theme, that

you based your justification on freedom of trade. Your goods were for sale to anybody who came with the price. How many years ago was it that I heard you quoting Andrew Undershaft in *Major Barbara*? Have you forgotten 'The True Faith of an Armourer'? 'To give arms to all men who offer an honest price for them, without respect to persons or principles: to aristocrats and republicans, to Nihilist and Tsar, to Capitalist and Socialist, to Protestant and Catholic, to burglar and policeman, to black man, white man, and yellow man, to all sorts and conditions, all nationalities, all faiths, all follies, all causes and all crimes.' In the name of that True Faith you defended the selling of arms to Chinese mandarins and South American filibusters, and even to Nazis, who for ten years had no pretence of being a government, but were simply organized assassins shooting down their political opponents in the streets. How many times have I heard you declare that if you had suspicions of a man's reasons for buying arms you might report him to the police, but you would never refuse to take his money!"

"It's quite true, Lanny. I defended freedom of trade, and I acted on it so long as I could believe that I was living in a free world. But now I see the enemies of the free-enterprise system organizing to destroy it in every nation, and naturally I do not admit those enemies to the benefits of the system. I do not grant the rights of free speech to Communists who are trying to destroy free speech. If I had my way I wouldn't let them vote to abolish the right of voting; I wouldn't let them have a political party to destroy all other political parties. Certainly you know there is no freedom of trade inside Russia or with Russia."

"That is a question of definitions. Because trade is organized and systematized——"

"They can fool you with fancy words, but not me. There is nothing of what I mean by freedom of trade in or with Russia, and there won't be any with Spain if the Reds get their way. It is simply an attempt to spread the Russian system into Western Europe and let it build a fortress there. We failed to stop them in Russia because the country was too big and our people didn't understand the danger; but it appears they can be stopped in Spain, and certainly I'm not going to turn traitor to my class and my principles and take the gold of men whom I know to be enemies of civilization."

"I know many of these people, Robbie, and they are the finest of idealists." * *

"I am perfectly willing to concede it; but as I have told

you many times, I do not believe that this world can be run by idealists, and I am certain that the idealists are being used as a front for shrewd criminals who stop at nothing to get their way. You see it happening right now in Russia, where the idealists have been shoved aside one by one, and now they are being framed and accused of treason in order to get an excuse for murdering them."

Robbie was referring to public trials then going on in the Soviet Union which were the subject of hot controversy in the outside world. Lanny had talked with his Red uncle about them, and with his Red half-sister and brother-in-law—something that his father had not troubled to do. They had convinced Lanny that the Nazis and other sworn enemies of the Reds had been sending their agents into the workers' republic, well provided with funds and subtle wiles to turn internal controversy into intrigue and sabotage. "It seems to me this was pretty apt to happen," Lanny said. "And no doubt the Red leaders are as determined to protect their system as you are to protect yours, Robbie."

"I recognize it's war," was the father's reply. "I'm going to take my part in it, and naturally I'm sorry to see my son go wandering out into No Man's Land, inviting both sides to take potshots at him."

IX

All this was an old story to them both, and they knew that discussion was futile. But there was something which Lanny wanted very much to know about, and he thought that this might be a chance to find out.

"Tell me, Robbie," said the amateur secret agent. "Suppose—just for the sake of argument—that Roosevelt should be re-elected; and suppose that Hearst and McCormick and the other big gentry who hate him so bitterly should put up the money, and Father Coughlin should supply the eloquence, and our Silver Shirts and Ku Kluxers and Knights of the White Camellia and other native Fascists should join with the Bund and get Lindbergh or somebody like him to lead a revolt, and Hitler and Mussolini should send in arms by way of Mexico, would you sell Budd-Erlings to that crowd and refuse to sell to the New Deal government?"

"That's all nonsense, Lanny, and a waste of words."

"I beg your pardon, it's an exact and perfect parallel to what is happening now in Spain. Those are the very elements behind

Franco, and the only difference is that we have no Morocco on Long Island, and no Foreign Legion and army of Moors to cross the Sound and besiege New York. Also, our government is a hundred and fifty years old, while that of Spain is not many more days old ; otherwise everything is identical."

"I'll decide problems like those when I come to them," replied the father. "At present I'm busy making aeroplanes."

His son was watching him narrowly. They were old friends, and meant a lot to each other in spite of all this wrangling. Lanny exclaimed suddenly : "Deal fairly with me, Robbie !"

"I am trying to, my son——"

"Give me a straight answer to a straight question. Has anybody ever come to you with such suggestions as I have just outlined ?"

Robbie was obviously taken aback. After hesitation that was visible, he remarked : "There are all sorts of cranks in the world, and they're not all on one side."

"Then somebody *has* come ! Tell me, have there been many ?"

"There have been several."

"You would be a shining mark for them, just as I am for the Reds. You realize that ?"

"I suppose so."

"Then the idea of upsetting Washington and putting an end to the New Deal isn't a product of *my* cracked pot !"

"Not entirely." Robbie tried to smile, but it was rather feeble.

"Tell me this," persisted the inquisitor ; "when you were over at Irma's, did you ever meet a poet by the name of Forrest Quadratt ?"

"Yes, I met him."

"And did he ever broach such ideas ?"

"Really, Lanny——"

"Really, my dear father ! Do you owe more faith to a hired Nazi agent than to your own flesh and blood ?"

"I don't think it's a question of faith. Quadratt is a German, and naturally he voices German ideas."

"But Quadratt isn't a German—he's an American-born citizen ; and when he comes to you whispering Nazi schemes for America, he is certainly a wolf in sheep's clothing. Of course he's shrewd as the devil, and he wouldn't come right out with it ; he'd tell you how it was done in Germany, and point out how rapidly the situation is moving to a crisis over here."

"I don't think there is anything to be gained by discussing him, Lanny. I do not admire him or share his ideas."

"Very well, then, how about my new brother-in-law, the Capitano? Have you met him?"

"Naturally. Marceline could hardly fail to bring him to see us. And besides, he's an airman, and we have many interests in common."

"They have gone to California, I understand; the Capitano is speaking to Italian-Americans—he's a war hero and a celebrity, and I'm told that his expenses and a lot more are being paid by the Circolo Mario Morgantine, which is another name for Mussolini's government in New York. Now tell me, did he ever discuss these ideas with you?"

"He explained his own viewpoint, naturally. I was interested to hear it from one who speaks with authority."

"He's younger than Quadratt and not so subtle, and he'd probably come right out with it. The way by which you can end all your troubles! Smash the labour unions once for all, and make it impossible for the C.I.O. ever to break into your plant! Keep the New Deal from taking most of your income and the excess profits of your company! Vittorio will help to win over the airmen; you will furnish the planes, and they will seize the aerodromes overnight; the tank corps will join them, and they will take possession of the government arsenals, and soon have the whole country under control. Is that the line?"

"You know, Lanny, you have always had a keen imagination——"

"I didn't imagine one bit of it, Robbie—I listened in drawing-rooms, including my mother's and my wife's. You yourself heard Ambassador Child tell about Mussolini's coup, and how he, Child, had got financial backing from Wall Street. You know how Thyssen and Hugenberg and the rest of them financed Hitler—they told you themselves. I'm sure you know the men who are putting up the cash for this raid upon the Spanish people. If Juan March hasn't sent a representative to you for planes—tell me, has he done so?"

Robbie didn't like to lie to his son. And besides, there was a part of his mind which couldn't help admiring this erratic idealist. By God, what didn't these Reds manage to find out!

X

Lanny went to call on the Hansibesses, as he called them. They had their baby, and Lanny stood over the crib looking down upon a pair of large dark eyes which moved slowly here and there, in-

quiring about this strange world into which babies are so startlingly projected. The inquiry would succeed to a limited extent, but never completely. The proud parents were calling this new arrival Freddi; so gradually the name would begin to take on new meaning, happier than the old, the uncle hoped. "If we can keep Nazis out of this part of the world!" he thought; but he didn't put it into words.

Lanny telephoned to the Murchisons, had the Comendador stowed in the station-wagon, and set out early one morning up the valley of the Newcastle River and through the hills to the Hudson. He followed the course of that great stream to Albany and then continued north through lovely farming country. It was early autumn and the farther he went, the more the foliage had progressed in those changes which are magnificent but also sad because they are steps towards death. The deeper he got into the Adirondacks, the less he saw of this recurrent tragedy, for the pines and firs and junipers have devised for themselves little hard sharp leaves which can retain their chlorophyll in spite of winter blasts. In the valleys were flaming reds and yellows, but the mountain slopes would stay green until they turned suddenly white.

The plateglass man and his family had their "camp" on a remote little lake, and were staying later than their neighbours because they loved the sharp bracing air and the walks on woodland pathways floored with mosses and ferns. The hunting-season was nearing, and the partridges were drumming at sunset and the deer whistling and blowing at night. There were log fires burning in all the rooms, and Lanny thought of Karinhall—but what a difference in two civilizations! He told his friends about it, laughing; here the game was wild and the people tame, while among the Nazis it was the other way round. "But don't quote me!" he said.

The Murchisons were far less pretentious persons than the Budds and Vandringhams. Harry would always be the rather naïve and kind-hearted fellow who had fallen head over heels in love with the luscious Beauty Budd and had come so near to carrying her and her little son off to Pittsburgh at the outbreak of the World War. Adella, who knew the story, would always find Lanny a romantic figure, a fountainhead of culture at which she had been happy to drink. Now Harry was growing stout, and his wife was at that "dangerous age" where she was looking about restlessly for something new and different. Lanny would serve for a few days, but in a purely platonic way; Lanny was art and music, Lanny was Europe, to which an idle rich woman's thoughts turned nostalgically.

The nearest they came to intimacy was when Adella asked about the break-up of his marriage, and Lanny told her—not the political side, but those charges which Irma was soon to present in court. The plateglass lady who had once been a secretary sighed and remarked that it was somewhat the same in her home; Harry also insisted upon reading the newspaper at the breakfast table and didn't hear what was said to him; the only solution which had occurred to her was to get two newspapers. Lanny said: "Well, they're certainly interesting enough these days."

He told the story of his visit to Spain, and did not feel it necessary to hide where his sympathies lay. His point of view was new to his friends and they asked many questions. Harry said: "Well, if it has to come I'll take my chances." The wife said: "I could always brush up on stenography and support you."

Concerning the painting the expert made a little speech: "I am embarrassed to be trying to make money out of you two, and I want you to know exactly how I feel. I enjoy meeting you, and I know you will enjoy looking at the picture; if you want to buy it, all right, and if you don't, all right, because I've already had a couple of nibbles, and it's possible I might sell it over the telephone from here. I'm on my way to Cleveland to see a couple of clients about other pictures, and one of them may want this one. It's a genuine Goya, signed by him, and Zoltan Kertezsi confirms this opinion; but unfortunately it's another Spanish old man, and whether you can stand two of them in the house is a problem. The point is, you must promise not to feel under the slightest obligation; don't buy it for friendship's sake, but purely and simply because you want it and think it's worth the price. Is that a bargain?"

"Let me tell you, Lanny," replied Adella, "those paintings we bought through you are the best investments we ever made. They brought a lot of interesting people to our home, and some of them became our friends. They were people we never would have heard of if we hadn't got advertised as a pair of art lovers!"

XI

So once more the Comendador was brought in, hung up, and ceremoniously unveiled. His coat of light varnish was new and his splendour undeniable; when Adella saw him she caught her breath, so Lanny guessed that his errand was not in vain. The three stood in front of the canvas for an hour or more, while he explained the fine points of the work, with that authority which Zoltan had given

him and that charm of manner which he had acquired in half a dozen of the world's capitals. He pointed out the elements of the design and the colour arrangement; he discussed the personality of the subject and the carefully veiled satiric intent. He explained the significance of the orders which the Comendador wore, and the collar with the furisons and double steels; he told about the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece, founded in Burgundy so many hundred years ago. He described the land of Aragon and told something of its history, and of the broken-down family in which he had found this forgotten masterpiece.

Also, of course, all about the aeroplane attack, the bullet holes, and the repair work. He invited them to pick out the damaged places, and watched with amusement while they failed. There happened to be a slight defect in the sash which the old gentleman wore; nearly every one had picked that out as one of the spots, and it was fun to tell them that it wasn't. Lanny produced the photographs of the damaged painting, front and rear, and with these before them they still couldn't see any signs of the repairs. That always impressed people, and provided an interesting subject of conversation.

The matter was clinched when he told about Robbie's brilliant ideas. Harry burst out laughing, and exclaimed: "By God, we'll let Jackson try that some day!" referring to the publisher of the paper which Harry read at the breakfast table. "He could do it for the Red Cross."

Adella said: "I think we want that painting, dear." And it is the rule in most American families of wealth that when the woman wants it, she gets it. Harry wrote a cheque for twenty-five thousand dollars and Lanny wrote a bill of sale. When these had been exchanged, Adella put in a petition. "If I get in a stenographer in the morning, will you dictate everything that you have told us: the art criticism, the history, and all about how the painting was damaged and the repairs made?"

Lanny said: "You sit by and ask questions." He understood that a rich lady hungry for attention was providing herself with another "spiel" for her friends.

XII

The salesman, well pleased with himself, continued his motor trip and interviewed several of his clients, showed them photographs, and told them what he had listed in Spain and Germany, in England

and France. He looked at many fine paintings, some of which he had handled in the past. He got several orders and commissions, and had a most agreeable time. It appeared that the episode in Reno wasn't going to make much difference in his social status. He would be an "ex"—but after all, it was an ex-lion. Nothing altered the fact that he had met the great ones of Europe and that his anecdotes bore the stamp of authenticity. He would still take his high attitude concerning matters of art, and be able to get away with it.

All the time on these long drives he was thinking: "How am I going to get an aeroplane for Alf?" He thought: "I'll go back to Newcastle and lay the money down before Robbie, and put it up to him that Alf may lose his life flying some old crate because I can't get him a decent plane." I'll say: "You'll have him on your conscience the rest of your life." I'll say: "It's a crucial issue with me, a test of everything you have preached to me during your whole life." But no, Lanny knew his father too well; it wouldn't work. The issue was crucial with him also. He might suffer ever so much, but he would never give way. And apart from the human and family aspects of the matter, Lanny couldn't afford to break with such a valuable source of information. Robbie talked freely, because he had such contempt for his opponents in the class struggle that he didn't care how much they knew.

All right, then, get some other make of plane, the second best. Lanny knew them all, having listened to his father's technical conversation. He would drive to the city where they were made, enter the office, and put down the cash. "Gentlemen, here are twenty-five thousand dollars. I want one of your latest pursuit planes." Would they simply say: "All right, sir, here you are"? Or would they look him over and inquire: "What do you want it for?" Certainly they would ask: "Where do you want it delivered?" And that, too, was something to think about!

Lanny had been reading between the lines of the newspapers and realizing that it was no simple business matter getting munitions of any sort into Spain. It wasn't against American law, because the country's Neutrality Act didn't apply to civil wars—so the lawyers had discovered, to the embarrassment of a State Department which was eager to apply it. There had begun a clamour to alter the law lest the shipment of arms involve us in fighting with which we had no concern. Meanwhile, the State Department and all the law-enforcement authorities were doing their best to handicap would-be sellers and shippers of arms to the Spanish government. An export licence had to be obtained, and this would be delayed, and in the

meantime there would be publicity, embarrassing to anyone who was trying to make money in a way displeasing to gentlemen of wealth and fashion in Washington who were playing along with the British Tories, and with Spanish aristocrats like the Duque de Alba, Spanish business men like Juan March, and Spanish soldier-crusaders like Francisco Franco.

It was what you might call a ruling-class racket. American arms could be sold freely to Germany and Italy, because these were legitimate governments represented by proper gentlemen and noblemen and business-men in Washington. When such arms were reshipped to Franco by way of Portugal and Spanish Morocco, the diplomats and statesmen sitting as a "Non-Intervention Committee" would resolutely close their eyes and refuse to see it. But let anybody try to sell or ship anything to Barcelona, and the dealers would be hounded by secret service men and other government agents; the shipowners would be browbeaten, the insurance companies would threaten them, and so on all the way down the line. When the ships neared Spanish waters, there would be German and Italian planes flying overhead, German and Italian submarines rising out of the sea and demanding to inspect their cargoes. The Nazi-Fascist press was clamouring for the suppression of smuggling, piracy, and everything in the world that interfered with Nazi-Fascist doings.

The only nations manifesting sympathy for the Spanish government were Russia and Mexico. The former was a long way off, and Lanny didn't know anybody in the latter, or how to find anybody who could be trusted. He considered going to the Mexican embassy in Washington. But suppose he ran into some gentleman sympathetic to the gentlemen's cause instead of to the cause of the workers? The same might happen if he went to the Spanish embassy. How was any foreigner to sort out the Franco agents from the Loyalists?

The one thing he couldn't afford to do was to bring publicity upon himself; and the weakness in every plan lay just here. The whole field of the conflict was flooded as with searchlights and anyone who stepped into it became a marked man or woman. Especially would that apply to a grandson of Budd's, a son of Budd-Erling, an about-to-be-discarded prince consort. Let him show up at any embassy, any headquarters of Reds or Pinks, any aeroplane factory or shipping-office, and instantly the spies of the enemy would be on his trail, and newspaper reporters would be haunting the gates of Shore Acres—and also of the villa which Irma Barnes Budd had rented in Reno.

Lanny was in the position of a rabbit in a wire cage : he went round and round, poking his nose between two bars, and then between the next two bars, and so on until he had come back to where he started. There just wasn't any way to get out ; the brains which had devised the cage were better than the brains of the rabbit. Lanny could break with his class, and with five out of his six families in America—all except Hansi and Bess. He could give up his sources of income and of information, and embark on a career as a Pink or a Red agitator ; on that basis he might stand a chance—only a chance—of buying a military aeroplane and getting it to Madrid. But certainly he couldn't do it and remain a member of the international privileged classes. He might spend part of the money bringing over some trusted friend such as Jerry Pendleton and putting him to work on the job ; but at once the Gestapo and the O.V.R.A., Il Duce's secret service, would set to work to find out where that trusted friend had got his cash, and it would be difficult indeed for Lanny to meet him or even to exchange notes with him without suddenly having the blaze of the searchlights turned upon him. Confronting these problems, Lanny realized more clearly his father's position, and why Robbie had said he would be risking bankruptcy for the Budd-Erling Corporation if he sold planes to be used in fighting Fascism.

XIII

Distracted by this tangle of problems, the traveller returned to New York, where his first act was to buy and read some of the Pink and Red papers, full of the latest news about Spain. One of the items was the announcement of a Spanish Relief Committee, formed for the purpose of shipping medical and food supplies to the struggling Spanish workers. The regular Red Cross wasn't doing a satisfactory amount, so it was up to sympathizers in all the outside countries. No licence was required for the sending of antiseptics and bandages, tinned milk and other foods ; and these were bound to grow scarce in Madrid and Barcelona, for Franco had seized the agricultural parts of the country, while the Loyalists had the industrial parts. Medical supplies might save the life of a wounded man and enable him to go back into battle ; so this was a kind of military help after all !

Such were the arguments advanced at a mass meeting which Lanny saw advertised in the left-wing papers and which he stayed in town to attend. One of the speakers was a clergyman, the pastor

of a church frequented by people of that way of thinking ; a gentleman who applied his Christianity here and now, he had become chairman of the committee, and now he made what is known as the " collection talk." He certainly made a hit that night, for while listening to his eloquence Lanny Budd suddenly made up his mind what he was going to do with his money.

Next morning he went into a stationery store and bought several sheets of paper and a couple of strong manila envelopes, one a little larger than the other. He asked the use of a typewriter for a few minutes and addressed the larger envelope to the clergyman, marking it : " Personal. Deliver only to addressee." Also he wrote a note :

" The enclosed is to be turned over to the Spanish Relief Committee. The giver wishes to remain anonymous ; the return address on the envelope is fictitious. The giver will be in your church next Sunday morning and requests you to acknowledge receipt of the gift at that service. Please preach on the subject ' The Degeneration of the Christian Religion in Spain and the Calamity It Has Brought upon the Spanish People.' "

Having posted Harry's cheque to his bank in New York, Lanny now went there and wrote a counter-cheque to himself. He received twenty-five new, smooth, and shiny thousand-dollar bills and slipped them into his breast pocket. After looking around to make sure he was not followed, he walked to the nearest post-office, wrapped the bills in a couple of sheets of paper, sealed them in the smaller envelope, and sealed that in the larger. This he duly registered, giving the name of John T. Jones, 47634 S. Halsted Street, Chicago—he hoped that was far enough out to be fictitious ! He put on a special delivery stamp for good measure, and went away chuckling at the thought of the shock which was coming to that worthy clergyman.

XIV

That evening, in Shore Acres, the prodigal son phoned to his father's home, saying : " Robbie, I want you to do me a favour. I am inviting you and Esther to come to church with me next Sunday morning in New York."

" Is it one of your Pink churches ? " inquired the long-suffering and forewarned father.

" You will call it that," replied the son, " but that is not why I am inviting you. It is for a very personal reason which you will

understand when you are there. It's a small favour to grant, and it's rather important to me."

"Are you planning to enter the Pink ministry?" inquired Robbie anxiously, for really he never knew what to expect next.

"Come and you'll find out."

It was a church very much like the First Congregational of Newcastle, and the audience was much the same, having no visible signs of "radicalism." Robbie had had to give up his golf and have breakfast at seven-thirty to get there, so it really was quite a lot to ask. Lanny was waiting on the steps, and the three went in and listened to prayers and hymns much the same as at home. Esther always had a hard time getting her husband into a church, so she was grateful for this, but at the same time wondering what could be coming.

The preacher came into the pulpit and began as follows:

"My friends: My subject this day is the Degeneration of the Christian Religion in Spain and the Calamity It Has Brought upon the Spanish People. I have chosen this theme at the request of a gentleman who has promised to be in the congregation. I have never seen this gentleman and do not know his name, but he has paid a high price for the favour he asks. As most of you doubtless know, I have become chairman of the Committee for Spanish Relief, and recently I spoke at a mass meeting in which I called for funds to buy medical supplies so badly needed by the besieged Spanish people. Next morning a messenger brought to my home a special delivery registered letter, and when I opened it I found an anonymous note, together with twenty-five crisp one-thousand-dollar notes. I repeat, lest you cannot believe your ears, twenty-five thousand dollars in cash to help save the lives of wounded Spanish soldiers, and to feed their wives and children. Nothing quite like that has ever happened in my life before, and I wish to acknowledge the gift and thank the unknown giver from the bottom of my heart. I shall see to it that his generosity is made known to the people of Spain, so that they may understand that there are still believers in freedom and real democracy in the American Republic, and that the heroic Spanish fighters are not entirely deserted in their hour of dreadful trial."

Lanny and his parents listened to truths about Spain which he knew well, but which the parents had never heard before. When it was over and they came out, Robbie said: "I get the point, son. Thanks for inviting me." Esther was deeply moved, and exclaimed: "It was kind of you, Lanny; and your father will benefit from it in spite of himself."

25

O Freude, Habe Acht !

I

LANNY settled down at Shore Acres and devoted time to the occupation of child study. He played the piano for his little subject and taught her to dance; showed her swimming-strokes in the indoor pool and took her pony-riding over the estate. He made her speak French with him, and reminded her of that pleasant land concerning which her memories had begun to fade. He was careful to include the grandmothers in some of these affairs—always both, playing no favourites. Between times he read what was happening in the world and now and then went into the great city, where the new shows were opening and where human life was fermenting and pullulating as in a vat of mash.

Something new was coming out of this vat, and no one could be sure just what. New kinds of aerobic bacteria swarmed in it, and made war on the old familiar kinds; some brewmasters were certain that the new kinds were better than the old, while others were sure they were poisonous. As from the beer brew or the wine vat there rise incessant bubbles, so from this human fermentation were given off a steam of ideas, a clamour of argument, uncountable millions of printed and spoken words. Men shouted at one another on street corners, they hired halls and denounced and raged, and thousands of other men and women came to applaud or to jeer according to their choice. In the daytime most of them had to work, but many argued even while they worked, and some managed to make arguing their work; "agitators" they were called, and they earned their living by making speeches or printing papers or organizing others to protest.

There was a part of the great city known as Yorkville, lying east of Central Park, where the Germans were numerous; here the Nazis shouted and paraded and sold their papers. Farther south was a tenement district known as Little Italy, where the Fascists did the same. Just east of Union Square the Communists had their headquarters in an old factory building. The Socialists had a centre in the Rand School near by, and farther down-town the Jewish Socialists had a newspaper with more readers than there were Jews in all Palestine.

Now all these groups had got their eyes fixed upon Spain; they followed the progress of the war with strained attention, and paralleled it with a propaganda war all over the city. When a great German steamer came in to its pier, bringing Nazi propaganda in various languages, or when it went out loaded with munitions to be transhipped to Portugal, the Reds came swarming to "demonstrate," and the Nazis fell upon them with clubs and blackjacks. The police, many of whom were Irish and bitterly anti-Red, stood by and enjoyed the show. The mayor of the city, part Jewish and half Italian, had been a Socialist not so long ago, and the Red papers denounced him as a renegade, while delegations of the workers called upon him to demand that he enforce the law.

Neither side in this struggle was content with words; both knew that it was time for action, and both opened what were in effect recruiting-offices for their side. It was against the law to enlist men for service in foreign armies, but there was nothing to prevent men from going if they wished, and there was no law against giving them information and advice or even funds to help them on their way. There was being organized in Madrid what was known as the International Brigade, a counterpart to Franco's Foreign Legion. Young Germans, young Italians driven into exile had a chance to get at their home enemies on foreign soil, and they were coming by squads and platoons. All that New York press which is called radical was full of their doings, and Lanny would clip items and forward them to Rick; when he received a letter from Raoul, full of news, he made copies and sent them not merely to Rick and Trudi, but also, anonymously, to papers which might print them. Now and then he would attend a meeting, going in quietly and attracting no attention. As a criminal returns to the scene of his crime, he went back to the church where he had hired a sermon. When one of the church workers picked him out as a likely prospect and asked him if he would care to join, he replied: "I am a stranger in town," and slipped away.

II

Towards the end of October Hansi and Bess returned to their home and Lanny spent several days with them. They were nearer in their ideas than previously; in a time of war differences seem less important than agreements. Lanny told the story of his adventures, and Bess inquired: "Do you suppose they would welcome us in Madrid?"

"Good Lord!" he said. "They would give you the keys to the city."

"We wouldn't take any money from them," added Hansi.

"They have plenty of money," replied the other. "What they lack is planes and tanks." He added: "I think I'll take Alf and his chum when they have finished their training. So we may meet there."

At this time General Franco's armies had lifted the siege of Toledo and were about to start northwards towards Madrid. Bess said: "We had better hurry, or we may be too late." Her husband exclaimed: "Oh, God!"

They were three thousand miles away from danger, but they shuddered at the thought of bombs being dropped upon the homes of civilized and enlightened people. They sat in front of a log fire in a comfortable old house, but their peace of mind was ruined by the vision of comrades from a score of nations lying out in wind-swept trenches of the Guadarramas. They had money in the bank, fame, and friends, an art which they loved and cherished, but they dared not permit themselves to enjoy these blessings, because the civilization in which they had been reared was trembling on the brink of a terrifying abyss. What security could there be for any civilized person in any part of the world when bandits were permitted to seize the resources of nation after nation, to murder all the free-minded people and set all the wage-slaves to work producing mass destruction? Planes and bombs to wreck cities, submarines to torpedo steamships, monstrous tanks to roll over farmlands, crush human beings, and blast everything in their paths! You wanted to go out and ring an alarm-bell—but who would heed it? This was a world of half-blind people who made a religion out of total blindness, and elected to power and responsibility only those who could see nothing, and would let nobody tell them what lay in front of their noses.

III

Lanny took a steamer to England, for he had picture business there, and Alf had written that his training was near completion. Lanny wanted to see Rick and tell him the news, also try to help Nina over a period of anguish. When a man acquires friends he adds not merely to his joys but to his sorrows, and he must expect to take the bitter with the sweet; especially when he chooses his friends among those who are self-doomed to trouble.

There really wasn't the slightest necessity for an English lad, heir to a title and a fine old estate, sensitive and intelligent, in the midst of a promising university career, to drop all these blessings and go off to a foreign land and engage in the most hazardous and nerve-racking occupation known, the manipulation of a fighting-plane in battle. But some Englishmen are like that. Wherever there is injustice being done in the world, you may look to find some Englishmen opposing it; even when the wrongs are being committed by their own government, they lift up their voices in protest, they win the verdict of history and save the good name of their country.

Here was this tall and slender lad, not especially robust—but then one didn't need physical force to handle a plane. He was all on fire with his cause; at last he was going to be able to do something, instead of merely sitting and complaining while the world went to the devil. He had had fourteen years in which to learn to hate the Fascists; it meant that he had begun very young—but they all did that in this household of advanced intellectuals. Alfie said nothing about his chances of coming back, nor did the other members of the family, but of course they knew that the chances would be slim. Nobody spoke any word that sounded like heroics. Alfie said: "England has got to fight them sooner or later, and some of us might as well start the ball rolling."

What he talked about was the technicalities of the new trade he was learning. He discussed problems of ballistics and of N.A.C.A. cowls; engine valves made of tungsten, hollow and filled with potassium nitrate and sodium nitrate to carry off the heat; wing-loading ratios—he was flying a "pursuit" with a ratio in the upper thirties, and it "came in at ninety," meaning that its landing speed was ninety miles an hour. He discussed octane ratios which were high and getting higher all the time. He asked Lanny about American military planes; the Boeing, which had put the others out, and then the Douglas, which seemed to have put the Boeing out, and now the Budd-Erling, which was putting them all out.

Lanny told the sad story of his failure with Robbie; there was no need to spare anything, for the family had known Robbie since the days before Alfie was born, and Rick had shared in the problem of handling him—not very successfully. Alfie told his friend not to worry; he was sure the Spanish government forces would have plenty of good planes. He was flying as many different types as he could get hold of, and also learning the mechanic's

job, for in war-time you never knew what emergencies might arise. Alf's idea was to get to Madrid, and if he succeeded, his commanding officer would be Major Ignacio de Cisneros, husband of Constanca de la Mora. Alf wanted to know if she had said anything about her husband or the planes he flew. A pity that Lanny had spent so much time in the Prado, instead of going out to the aerodromes and seeing what they had. Lanny said: "They weren't showing very much to strangers right then."

When the week-end was over, Lanny took Nina's small car and drove the lad some fifty miles to the private flying-school in which he was getting his training. There was a flying-field with hangars, and a group of young fellows, among them the stocky and red-headed chap who was Alf's partner. They employed a brand-new language which had to be interpreted to any outsider, American or English. The "feel" of the place made Lanny recall that training-camp on Salisbury Plain to which Robbie had taken him and Rick in the summer of 1914, a few days before the outbreak of the Great War. The planes were three times as fast as those old biplane "crates" made of wood and wire and canvas, but the spirit of the pilots was the same, and Lanny shivered when he thought how closely the world situation resembled that of the day when they had learned of the murder of an Austrian archduke and duchess. The statesmen of Britain were nearly all the "old gang," and had learned from 1914 just enough to shake their nerves and make them ready to give way before every threat of war.

IV

In one of the hangars stood a two-seater trainer plane, and Alf said: "Would you like to go up with me?" Lanny answered: "Sure thing." He had been up in a Budd-Erling at home, and anything else would be tame in comparison.

The plane was wheeled out, and while the motor was being warmed up he put on the heavy flying-suit and the parachute which the law required. Alf examined the gauges, and they strapped themselves into their seats and put on the head-phones, for the pilot has a phone to talk to his co-pilot, even when they are side by side; in combat he does not take his eyes off the objective even long enough to shout a word into somebody's ear. The motors began to roar and the plane to move; it gained speed and rose gracefully, and soon they were soaring over the

countryside of Hertfordshire, with Alfie pointing out features of the landscape which it was a part of his business to study in photographs and maps and then to recognize from the air.

Very pleasant to sit there and chat, while accomplishing a feat which had been the dream of mankind for twenty or thirty centuries, or perhaps since the first man observed the eagle and the hawk performing with delightful grace and tempting ease. Alfie said: "I don't ever let myself get bored, because I practise and learn something." Lanny replied: "Go ahead," for he knew that this luxury was costing a lot.

The plane began to climb, and little frying sounds began to crackle in the passenger's ears. The pilot said: "Don't let me take you too high. I'm in practice, you know." Lanny waited until he had all he thought his ear-drums would stand and then he said: "I holler 'nuff."

They levelled off at ten thousand feet and it was decidedly cold, even in the flying-suit. Alfie inquired: "Shall we try a stall?"

Lanny knew all about that, the most dreaded accident which can happen in a plane. It starts to slip sideways and plunges down, and is completely out of control unless the pilot knows the trick. Fighters have to know every trick, and this one especially, as it is a means of dodging out of reach of a pursuer, of disappearing out of his world in a flash. Lanny inquired: "Have you tried it in this plane?" and when his friend answered: "Many times; that's what I come up for," he said, in the formula which his country had given to the world: "O.K. by me."

So all of a sudden the plane turned half over and began to slide sideways. At first you didn't know that you were falling, because everything was so far away; but presently you realized that the land was rushing towards you, and the heavier air came crowding back against your ear-drums, driving the blood out of your capillaries. The instinct of the pilot is to pull hard on the stick, because that is the ordinary way to level off; but now the stick will not move and the harder you try, the worse you make matters. What you have to do is to turn into a dive, gain speed and yet more speed, and if you have altitude enough at the start you can gradually come out in safety. Lanny clenched his hands and tried not to be frightened; he knew that if his friend's skill failed, he wouldn't be frightened for long. There began a terrific roaring in his ears, and when the plane began to level off, everything went suddenly black before him and he slumped into his seat and knew nothing about the landing.

When he opened his eyes again he was dizzy and things were

blurred ; he heard the voice of his young friend saying, in great anxiety : " Oh, Lanny, I shouldn't have done it ! " Right away he realized that he was back on English soil, and it was his duty to put a grin on his face. He made the effort, and remarked : " It's quite curious ; just like taking an anæsthetic."

" Oh, I was a fool ! " exclaimed the lad.

" Not at all," Lanny answered quickly. " An interesting experience, and I'm glad to have had it."

" You just weren't used to it. I've been prepared for it gradually, and I ought to have realized the difference." Lanny saw that Alfie was trying to save his friend's face in the presence of the mechanics and students who had come running.

It was up to an American to play the game according to the rules ; so he said : " Now I'll know how you chaps feel when you go out after the rebels." There were several here who were getting their training for the same purpose as Alfie, and Lanny had been introduced to them. He sat for a while and listened to talk about different planes and how they behaved in a nose-dive ; he was glad not to have to move until he was sure his legs would balance and not make a spectacle of him.

v

Back in Paris, Lanny possessed himself of a car and went to see Trudi. They had exchanged cautious letters, in which their work was referred to as " sketches." Lanny had written that the Comendador had found a pleasant place of residence in Pittsburgh ; Trudi, in return, had stated that one of the persons who had been marketing her art works had met with a serious accident.

He arrived at her studio late in the afternoon, and the first question he asked was about that matter. The man in question, a former school-teacher and Social-Democrat, now a refugee earning his living by doing translation work in Paris, had disappeared. That was all there was to be said ; he had left some friend in a café in the evening to walk to his lodgings and he had not arrived there. More than two weeks had passed and the French police had been unable to find any trace of him.

To Trudi it was obvious that the Gestapo had got on the man's trail and had done away with him. There had been a number of such cases, not merely in France but also in Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia—all the countries bordering on Naziland. Trudi suspected the Sûreté Générale of being not deeply concerned in the matter ; she herself had kept aloof, but friends of the missing man

had been reminded by the police that he might have fallen into the river, or committed suicide, or run off either with some woman or to dodge his debts—they were most ingenious in thinking up excuses when they wished to avoid trouble with a provocative and dangerous neighbour. How different, said Trudi, when a Russian general, a prominent leader of the Whites, had disappeared and it was suspected that he was a victim of the Q.G.P.U.!

A serious matter for Trudi, because she might be next. She could only say that her meetings with the missing man had been carefully camouflaged, and they had never exchanged any notes. She had another connection, and the work was going on; she would keep it going as long as she lived and as long as funds could be found. That meant Lanny, of course. So he told her about his trip and what he had done with the price of the Comendador. She was disappointed about the Budd-Erling, having heard so much about the wonders it was going to do in Spain.

Sad news from that tormented land! The Italians had landed close to a hundred thousand troops, and General Franco was marching in four columns upon Madrid, still taking very few prisoners. Meanwhile the farce of "non-intervention" was continuing; the powers were meeting in one conference after another, and the Nazi and Fascist delegates with their usual effrontery were denying everything and turning all charges against the "Bolshevist Jews." Since the Committee would not receive complaints of violation from either the Spanish government or private individuals, it followed that the only complaints came from the government of the Soviet Union. This government had announced that if the violations of neutrality did not cease, it would consider itself at liberty to sell arms to the Loyalist government. So the civil war of Spain spread into the press and over the air, becoming a civil war of Europe.

VI

In the midst of such strife and danger, it seemed like disloyalty to think about one's own concerns. But Lanny had lived most of his years—they were going to be thirty-seven in a few days—in war-torn or war-threatened Europe, and he had learned to turn his mind away from troubles. He let Trudi say all she had to say, and when a pause came, he asked: "Well, have you thought about us?"

She had, and was prepared for the question. "Lanny, how can I think of making any man happy when I have to live the life I do, when I may disappear off the street any night?"

"You must leave that to me, dear," he replied. "I am the sole judge as to my own happiness."

"I can't give up this work, you know."

"Have you ever heard me suggest it?"

"No, but I thought——"

"That wasn't what you were asked to think about, dear Trudi. You were going to decide whether you are, in your own mind, a widow."

There was no more chance to evade. She hesitated a while, and then murmured: "I have decided that I am a widow."

It was a somewhat unusual preliminary to love-making, but this was a special case and Lanny a special lover. They were sitting in two not very comfortable chairs three or four feet apart, and he made no move towards her, but looked straight into her sad blue eyes and smiled tenderly. She was wearing a painter's smock which she had laundered for his coming. As always she had braided her corn-coloured hair and wound it into a roll at the back of her neck. She wore no ornament of any sort, and had nothing to recommend her but those delicately chiselled and sensitive features and the straight-forward gaze of eyes like the summer sky.

Meeting them fairly, Lanny began a little discourse on the most ancient of all topics:

"I have had four love affairs so far in my life, Trudi. I learned something from each of them, and the benefit may be yours. Love is one of nature's precious gifts, which we in our folly often do our best to spoil. We spoil it with superstitions and taboos, with vanity, greed, selfishness, and plain dumb stupidity—the same forces which destroy most other good things of life. The prudes and bigots spurn love as sensual, but with civilized people it is overwhelmingly mental. It is what you believe about love, and what the other person believes, that makes it. That is why I have waited so long to let you make up your own mind."

"It was a kindness, and I am grateful," she assured him.

"It is possible for young people to fall distractedly in love with a face, or even with an ankle; but when we grow up we take ideas seriously, and find that we cannot love a person who does not share our motivating faith. That is what broke my marriage; I just couldn't stand Irma's mind and she couldn't stand mine."

"I understand that, Lanny; but are you sure you're not going to the other extreme now? We agree very well in our ideas; but then, I am so alien to your world—I wouldn't know how to live in it."

"I don't think I should ever want you to live in it. I go into it to

get money or information, and otherwise I doubt if I should ever go back."

"Can you really mean that? Your little daughter, for example?"

"I thought about her a lot on this visit. She is lovable, and I am deeply drawn to her. But there was a time when I felt the same emotions concerning my half-sister; she was such a gay and delightful child, and I played music for her and danced with her, and thought such innocent happiness was going to last all my life. But on this trip I was glad she was absent, because she belongs to a man I despise, and it would have been unpleasant for me to have to pretend to respect him and even to tolerate his opinions. I doubt if I'll ever be able to live in *Bienvenu* if *Marceline* and her husband are there. And naturally I fear the same disappointment with *Frances*. She will be trained by her mother and her two grandmothers, and if this world stays what it is she will become the wife of some plush-lined young snob whose conversation will inspire me with an impulse to hurl a sofa cushion at his head. Don't you see why I want to make some sort of life on the basis of my own way of thinking?"

"Yes, Lanny," she said, her voice low; "but you have chosen a woman who lives such an abnormal existence!"

"I have hopes that I may change that a little. We don't do our best work under conditions of anxiety and strain."

"My conditions are not of my choosing. I have thought about the matter day after day, and decided to put this cruel question to you: Suppose we became lovers, and then some day I decided that my duty required me to go back into Germany?"

Inside him he quailed; but he answered at once: "If you should make such a proposal I would expect to discuss the matter with you. You have advised me to stay in my world and do what I am doing, and perhaps I could convince you that your best job would be to help me. But if I failed, then of course I would go into Germany with you and do whatever I could. My connections there were of use to you once, and might be again."

"But all that wouldn't leave us much time or thought for love, Lanny."

"My dear Trudi, if either of us had been asked what sort of world we wished to be born into, I don't think we would have chosen this one; but here we are, and it's a place where love leads a precarious existence. There is an old German poem which I learned when I was a youth, about the two chambers of the heart and what they contain. Do you know it?"

"I don't recall it."

"The anatomists tell us that the heart has four chambers, but this poet says two ; in one dwells joy and in the other grief. When joy wakes in one, grief sleeps in the other. The poet whispers to joy to be careful and speak softly, lest grief should awaken. *O Freude, habe Acht ! Sprich leise, dass nicht der Schmerz erwacht !*"

VII

Lanny knew that the lady of his latest choice was a predominantly ethical being. She was guided by her intellect and moral sense. He had taken a long time to think what he was going to say to her ; in fact, he had been over it so often that, without meaning to, he had learned it pretty well by heart. He guessed that it wouldn't trouble Trudi if it sounded somewhat like a speech. She wouldn't want him to be overcome by his feelings, and she wouldn't want him to try to stir hers. She would listen attentively to every word he spoke, desiring to make sure that she was appealing to the best in his nature and that he was appreciating the best in hers. He desired every word to be exactly right ; but at the same time he would keep his friendly smile, for he wanted to teach her to play, and to bring back some of the colour into her fear-blanchéd cheeks.

He pointed out to her that love-making is an extremely ancient practice, which nature has established for purposes of her own. "The ascetics give it a bad name," he said, "but the fact is that it is one of the most delicate and gracious of the arts, and its delights penetrate every fibre of the being and become the basis of sympathy and understanding, companionship and co-operation, loyalty and devotion. Love is like the fire under the boilers, which gives power to all the machinery. Without it, life is a film in black and white ; with it, the picture glows with all the colours of the rainbow."

"I can see something of that effect in your speech," she replied.

"I have been blessed with the gift of words ; but making these dreams into a reality calls for serious thought and effort. It is not enough that we have an honest purpose ; we need some understanding of psychology, for no two human beings are alike and no two can know each other fully—how could it be possible, when we know so little about ourselves ? The main thing is that we appreciate the possibility of great happiness, and are willing to pay the price of it in kindness and patience, in unselfish concern for the other person's welfare. One of the great secrets I have learned about the embrace of love is that it is wiser to think not about the

happiness we are getting, but about that which we are giving. Such an attitude has to be mutual, of course, otherwise love becomes exploitation, which is something else entirely."

"I agree with all that, Lanny."

"I am asking a gift from you, and you have a right to know what use I expect to make of it. I am not any sort of predatory person, and I expect to pay in fairness and friendship for what I take. I cannot promise to pay in pleasure, because it would be egotistical for me to assume that I can furnish as much of that as you."

He smiled again, but she did not respond. The serious blue eyes were fixed intently upon his brown ones; the delicately chiselled features, concentrated in attention, made him wonder if this was the proper method of approach to a saint. "First of all," he resumed, "comes frankness. I will do my best to tell you what I am and what I feel and what I desire. If you will do the same we can understand each other and avoid many errors. One of my firm convictions is that love has to be based upon realities, and not upon any form of self-deception. Since you have been a married woman, this is what you might call a post-graduate course in the art of love. Will you tell me frankly what is in your heart now?"

"First of all, Lanny, I must not have a child. I could not bear to bring a child into the same world with the Nazis."

"The Nazis are having plenty of children. They are planning it that way."

"I know; they have the power. They have government, education, money, everything. I, who have to fight them, have very little, and must save that for my job."

"All right," he answered; "for the present, at any rate, no children. And now, another practical matter: you know that I cannot marry you until I get a cablegram from Reno, Nevada."

"I don't think you ought ever to marry me, Lanny."

"Why not?"

"Because I don't want to tie you down. Perhaps I will be able to make you happy and perhaps not. If I am not going into your world, why should we risk publicity and embarrassment for you and your work?"

"You don't think that a marriage ceremony is necessary to justify our love?"

"Such an idea would not occur to me. What I care about is what is in your heart. You have told me that, in your several little speeches."

"I will honour and respect you. I will try to understand you and your needs, and give you what you ask for. I will help you to

the best of my ability, and if you are in danger I will stand by you as I did before. Is that what you want to hear ? ”

“ Yes, dear,” she said. “ That covers everything.”

“ And that is our ceremony ? ”

Her eyes dropped, and she whispered : “ Yes.”

“ You know, Trudi,” he said, still smiling, “ I have never kissed you.” He arose, took her by the hand, and led her to the couch which stood at one side of the room. He sat beside her, remarking : “ I think it will be very nice to kiss you.”

He was surprised by her response. She leaned towards him and put herself into his arms, and at the same time began to weep ever so softly.

“ That is the way you feel, dear ? ” he asked.

“ Oh, Lanny ! ” she exclaimed. “ I have been so lonely ! And I have tried so hard to keep you from knowing it ! ”

VIII

After that Lanny didn't want to return to Bienvenu ; he wanted to stay right where he was. He would have been happy to get a larger studio and move into it ; but he had to use discretion while he was still legally a prince consort, and Trudi insisted they must always meet secretly so that she might never be the means of drawing the attention of Nazi agents to Lanny Budd. They must continue their old practice : she would be walking on the street and he would come with his car.

So many delightful roads and landscapes there were outside of Paris, north, south, east, west ; so many convenient places to dine, and ancient and obscure old inns where couples having an informal honeymoon could stay overnight with no questions asked. “ Oh, Lanny ! ” she exclaimed, more than once. “ You are spending so much money ! ” To which he replied : “ I have never lived so economically since I was born.”

They read the papers and listened to the radio in the car, and most of their thoughts were on the black shadow of death and destruction which was creeping over Spain. They were made heart-sick by the spectacle of futility and hypocrisy presented by the Non-Intervention Committee in London and by the League of Nations delegates in Geneva. They attended a huge rally called by the trade unions of Paris in the vast Luna Park ; they sat separately listening to Léon Blum defending his policy, and the greater part of the audience chanting : “ *Des avions pour l'Espagne !* ” They came

away certain that the cry would not be answered ; but somehow their bitterness was easier to bear when they told each other about it. Grief shared is grief reduced by much more than half. Lanny said : " You can't be really unhappy when you have love."

Straightway Trudi's conscience smote her. " Oh, Lanny, we *ought* to be unhappy ! "

" Be it if you can ! " he answered ; and she tried her best, but was not completely successful. A man who had managed to find happiness in four love affairs during two full decades of Europe's misery assured her that this, too, was an art which could be acquired. When he held her in his arms he would say : " Nature makes it quite plain that she wishes us to go on with this, even in war-time."

IX

Mr. and Mrs. Dingle, returning from New York, stopped in Paris on their way to Bienvenu, and Beauty suggested that Lanny drive them the rest of the way ; but he said he had offered to take Alfie and his chum to Madrid. That promised to be dangerous, and the mother tried to dissuade him, but it couldn't be done. He wasn't sure that he would return to Bienvenu this coming winter, and Beauty became suspicious, and got him alone in her room and said : " It's that German woman, Lanny ? "

He didn't think it worth while to lie to her. To do so would be cruel, for she would go on hunting up eligible young ladies. He answered : " It's a very heavy secret, old darling, and you mustn't breathe a word of it to a living soul. There are several sorts of reasons."

" Oh, Lanny ! What dreadful things are you doing ? "

" It's all right so long as we're not talked about. All you have to do is to say that I am working hard at selling pictures, and putting away a nest-egg for my old age "

" Tell me the truth, dear—are you happy with this woman ? "

" Happier than I have ever been since Marie died."

That justified all things to Beauty Budd. Love was made for happiness, and people were made for love. " Is she a good woman ? " she asked ; and the wayward son replied : " So good it's positively terrifying. Sometimes I don't see how I can live on such a high moral plane."

He was grinning, but his mother took him seriously. " I know how it is," she confessed. " I have the most devoted of husbands, and sometimes I feel the same way ! "

She brought along Madame Zyszynski, who was to spend a month or two at Balincourt; Beauty was about to phone there and tell them to come for her, when Lanny said: "I'll make a test with her, and deliver her afterwards." He drove the médium over to the Left Bank and deposited her in a little hotel, with a copy of *Le Rire* to entertain her; then he went to Trudi's studio and told her: "Madame is round the corner, ready for a séance."

Trudi was taken aback, even shocked. "Lanny, do you really think I ought to do that? I've been trying to put Ludi out of my mind."

"I know, but he's in your subconsciousness, and if you get a message from him, it certainly won't make you think he's alive. Also, other spirits might show up; the Bhikkhu, or your great-uncle Wilhelm if you had one, or maybe Tecumseh will do some Indian war-whoops for you—it's quite hair-raising."

Trudi took off her smock and put on a dress and hat and set out to walk to the near-by hotel, while Lanny sat in his parked car and read *Le Populaire*. The strangest newspaper in the world right then, he thought. Longuet had founded it during the World War and spent his fortune to build it up; then Blum had become joint editor, and by push and political skill had become the dominant factor. In this Spanish crisis they had compromised their disagreement on the basis that every editor was to voice his own convictions; so here was an editorial staff conducting a diurnal debate, and it was like listening to half a dozen brass bands each playing a different tune. In one column the Premier of the French Republic explained that *la chère Marianne* must put her own house in order, and that if she did so she would be impregnable to any attack; in the next column the foreign-affairs editor was declaring that the blunder of statesmanship now being committed by his colleagues would be fatal to republican institutions not merely in Spain, but in France and the rest of Europe. An admirable demonstration of freedom of discussion; but to Lanny it seemed like having a debate among the crew of a ship while the ship was heading for the rocks.

X

Madame was to go to a picture show, one of her greatest delights, thus giving Lanny time to hear a report from his *amie*. When she came he saw at once that something important had happened; her cheeks were flushed, and it was not just the walk in chilly autumn weather. "Oh, my dear!" she exclaimed. "The most amazing experience! I don't know how to tell it!"

"Ludi?" he inquired.

"Ludi alive and chatting with me, answering questions and asking some!"

"His voice?"

"That made it still more uncanny. Madame's voice and the old Indian's voice, but Ludi's mind, his personality. He knows all about us!"

"I hope he is *complaisant*!"

"He gives us his blessing. He says it is the wise course and he has been hoping for it." There was a pause, and suddenly the woman exclaimed, in a tone of distress: "Lanny, you surely wouldn't do a thing like that to me!"

She had asked it before, so he wasn't surprised. "It is the thought that none of us can quite get away from, dear. But you must know that I don't play monkey-tricks."

"You might be trying to help me to be happy."

"It would be a cheap and easy way, but I have chosen the hard one. Our love has to rest on the foundation of truth."

"Lanny, will you give me your word that you didn't tell Madame anything about us?"

"My word of honour as a gentleman, a lover, and a friend. I have never spoken your name to Madame or to anyone else outside of Germany since I learned about your underground work more than four years ago. I have never spoken the name of Ludi, except in that séance with the Bhikkhu which I told you about."

"I have to believe that, Lanny."

"Indeed you do! I take these psychic phenomena seriously; I make notes on them and study them, and try with the best faculties I possess to decide what they mean. I try not to let myself be cheated, and I surely don't ever dream of cheating anybody else. I am seeking what may be the key to new realms of knowledge. It may be the spirits of the dead, or it may be our memories taking on a life of their own. It may be a sort of mind plasma, working independently of you and me, building new forms just as you draw pictures or I play tunes. It may be another process of creation under way—I don't know what it is, but I know that it is real, and I am fascinated by it and want to find out all I can. Tell me now about Ludi."

"He talked about us in the most matter-of-fact way. He knows how I live. He even mentioned the *auberge* where we spent the last week-end, and the old *armoire* which you said your stepmother would love."

"Did he say how he knew these things?"

"He said he couldn't explain to me because I couldn't understand. He repeated that, and of course it seems rather like an evasion."

"Not necessarily. How would you explain an algebraic formula to a child?"

Lanny had taken the precaution to bring along a note-book, and he scribbled words such as *armoire* and *œufs à la coque*, which he had ordered for breakfast on their last excursion; also the name of "Estaire," Ludi's effort to give the name of Lanny's stepmother. It seemed to suggest that some French mind or tongue was concerned in the effort. Ludi had said nothing about Germany, except that he knew of Trudi's work and was aiding it. He wanted to assure her that he did not need her where he was and that he was happy in her happiness. He spoke a language of spirituality which was foreign to a Marxist tongue. When she commented on this he said: "When I *am* something, I know it, don't I?" He laughed, and went on to convince her that it was really he, mentioning various little domestic details, including a toothbrush with a handle made of plastic of a bright purple colour.

XI

"Well, there you are," said Lanny. "I thought it might happen to you sooner or later. And now what are you going to make of it?"

"I've been trying to recall everything he said, to see if there's anything I myself didn't know."

"So then you will be deciding that it's 'telepathy.' - But don't fool yourself with a word. Don't forget what an assumption you are making: that your mind and Madame's are one somewhere underneath; or at least they have some way of leaking one into the other, or getting mixed up so that you cannot keep secrets from her. That is surely something new and worth knowing about."

"Yes, but it isn't Ludi."

"It seems to me that if two minds can communicate without material means, it becomes a lot more easy to believe that two minds can exist without material means."

"Theoretically, I agree; but it makes a great difference in my feelings this afternoon if I decide that I was talking with Madame and not with Ludi."

Lanny smiled. "Poor old Zaharoff has been tormenting himself over that difference for the past six or seven years."

"Oh, by the way!" Trudi remembered. "I believe I got a message for him!" Ludi sort of faded away at the end; he talked

some nonsense which I couldn't get straight, and then Tecumseh broke in and said there was a little dark lady trying to speak, but hers was another foreign language and it was silly to have so many—as bad as it had been in his own land, when the Indians fought one another because they couldn't understand one another. The lady kept saying: '*Coraje!*'—that is Spanish, is it not?"

"Yes. Courage."

"Then she spoke some French words, and Tecumseh repeated them. She wanted her husband to have *coraje*, and to come to her; he would be coming soon now, and he must not be afraid."

"Madame knows that she is going to Balincourt to-night, so that seems all rather obvious."

"Tell him, anyhow," replied Trudi. "No doubt the poor old man needs *coraje* right now."

"Robbie says he has contributed to the cause of Franco," remarked her companion; "so I doubt if you wish to help him too much."

XII

That evening Lanny sat in the great library with the galleries and the bronze railings, before the fire of logs at which the retired munitions king warmed his eighty-six-year-old bones. His skin had come to resemble badly wrinkled parchment, and he rarely lifted his shrunken hands from his knees. He had attached to his chair a cord with a button so that he could summon his man at any moment. Except for this man and the East Indian servants he appeared to be entirely alone; if there were ladies in the house the visitor never saw them.

Zaharoff was always glad to welcome the son of Budd-Erling, thanked him for troubling to bring the medium, and asked how Robbie was doing and what he thought about the situation in Europe. Zaharoff himself found it most alarming—all the Western world was threatened with revolution on the Russian pattern and it was extremely doubtful if the avalanche could be checked. Lanny committed himself to the extent of saying that the problem was complex, and that his father would be deeply interested to know his associate's views.

By the edge of the rug in front of them lay a German shepherd dog, a beautiful creature, brown and black, with a glossy coat perfectly groomed. Lanny had never seen him before, but apparently he was an old dog, familiar with the household and taking seriously his guardian duties. He lay never taking his eyes off the stranger.

but the warmth of the fire was too much for him, and his head would begin to sink slowly until it rested on his paws, and at the same time his eyelids would droop; then he would start to sudden awareness and lift his head again and resume the performance. Looking from the dog to his master, Lanny perceived the same phenomenon of age; the old man was listening to the beginning of Lanny's sentence, but only half listening at the end. Doubtless it was his bedtime, so Lanny decided to deliver his message and depart promptly.

"Sir Basil," he said, "I think the duquesa has made another attempt to communicate."

The effect was immediate. The old man started into wakefulness, and his two trembling hands were clasped together over the hollow where a paunch once had been. "What did she say, Lanny?"

The younger told the story, mentioning a woman friend of the family; a thoroughly conscientious person, he declared, and there could be no doubt that the episode had occurred. But what a pitiful and unsatisfactory communication! Lanny, watching his host, was startled to see tears stealing down his cheeks, something the younger man had never before observed in twenty-three years of acquaintance with this "mystery man of Europe."

"Tell me, *mon garçon*!" he burst out, "what am I to believe about her? I would give my fortune to know, but nobody will tell me—nobody that I can trust!" His voice rose to a cry, and he stretched out his hands to the visitor; a sight not soon to be forgotten—ten bony claws, covered with brown wrinkled parchment, waving about in front of Lanny's face! And the greatest fortune in Europe—Robbie Budd said it was still that—offered for a simple little thing like telling what becomes of us when we die!

"If I could only know one way or the other!" the old man pleaded. "If I knew that I would see her, I would go to-night with never a qualm. But if I am not to see her, I sit here and cherish my memories, and count them better than nothing!"

The anguished tone called for an answer, and Lanny tried to give the kindest he could think of. "At least we all have this certainty, Sir Basil; if there is no future, we shall never know it. The days before we existed did not trouble us too greatly."

"That is not enough for me, Lanny. I do not want oblivion. I have so many responsibilities, and I cannot see anybody who is competent to carry them, who even has any conception of them. You spend a lifetime getting the reins in your hands, and then you have to drop them, certain that the vehicle will go into a ditch or over a cliff. You want to cry out a warning, but the world has no ears—or perhaps you have lost your voice! You have made mistakes, and

you have learned from them, but can you teach anybody? Never, never! The world turns its back upon you! Nobody comes near you except to get money! If there is anyone you can trust, he is too spineless, too lacking in ambition, to make any use of power. So everything is gone, everything!"

The old spider, the old wolf, the old devil was actually sobbing; sobbing out loud, and tears streaming from his eyes. The visitor was embarrassed—for, after all, here was a Knight Commander of the Bath of the British Empire, and this wasn't in the ritual. On the contrary, decidedly Levantine, the sort of thing to be expected of the lesser breeds without the law! Lanny could not have been more taken aback if the aged plutocrat had torn off his green smoking-jacket with the purple collar and cuffs, the tan-coloured flannel trousers, and the gold-embroidered slippers, followed by the underthings, whatever they were—in short, every stitch which covered his once expanded but now shrivelled nakedness.

"Life is too cruel, I tell you, *mon fils*! It is one series of traps and pitfalls. It is incomprehensible, it is intolerable, it is inexcusable!" Zaharoff was speaking French, and this long series of tripping syllables made a sort of litany of protest. "What is that in the Bible about vanity and vexation?"

The scholarship of Lanny's great-great-uncle Eli Budd enabled him to quote the passage with reasonable accuracy: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

"That is it," said the aged one; then, his voice dying low: "That is the last word."

After a pause, it apparently occurred to him that this behaviour had not been quite according to the code. "You must excuse me," he said. "I am losing my powers. It is a terrible thing to have to admit, and I have fought against it, but I cannot fight any more. I am a lonely and beaten old man, going empty-handed into my grave."

"That can happen to any of us, *mon ami*," said the younger.

Again a pause, and then the elder asked: "What else happened at the séance?"

Lanny couldn't refer to Trudi, so he began to tell about the Bhikkhu and the monastery on the palm-fringed shore. Thinking that it might embarrass his host to be looked at, he watched the dog, and saw the old head drooping and the old eyes closing. When he realized that he had put the dog fast asleep, he stole a glance at the master and discovered that he had done the same for him. The

proud head which had once ruled the secret councils of Europe now hung as far forward as it could, and the eyes which had seen so many chances of profit were shut tightly.

Lanny allowed his voice to sink lower, and when it had died away completely he arose and stole from the room. Neither master nor dog stirred, and Lanny opened the door to the passage where the attendant sat waiting. "*Le maître s'est endormi,*" he said.

"*Oui, Monsieur,*" replied the man. "*C'est sa coutume. Il est devenu très faible.*"

The visitor tiptoed to the front door and went to his car.

BOOK SEVEN

A HANGMAN'S WHIP

26

Perils Did Abound

I

AMONG the clients whom Lanny had acquired in Madrid was a certain Señor Sandoval, an exporter of various Spanish products to the Americas. He owned half a dozen examples of the French Impressionist school, and being worried about tax increases and other financial troubles he wanted to dispose of the paintings ; but his idea of their value had been such that Lanny had not been interested to handle them. Now the Señor had fled to Paris and had written to Lanny at Bienvenu, saying that he was ready to cut his prices in half. Receiving this in Paris, Lanny went to call, and discovered the Spanish gentleman in a state of anxiety too great to be concealed.

The armies of General Franco, marching on Madrid, had begun sending bombing-planes ahead, and one of them had dropped a messenger of death into a house directly across the street from the Señor's mansion. The result was that he wanted to sell, not merely half a dozen French paintings, but all his objets d'art, his antique furniture, and even the mansion itself ! He was an ardent Franco sympathizer, but it wasn't going to do him any good, because the Loyalists meant to fight, France was secretly sending in arms, and so Madrid was going to be destroyed. Such, at any rate, was the conviction the Señor had got out of reading different sorts of newspapers in Paris. Suppose his butler was a coward, and had already run away instead of protecting his master's property ! Suppose he was a traitor and had turned the property over to the government ! The master hadn't heard from him for a week, although his orders had been to write every day.

Lanny hadn't set out to become a gambler in art works ; but he had got a kick out of what he had been able to do with the Comendador, and therefore could be tempted. He had seen how easy

it was to take pictures out of Spain. As a dealer in art, he resented the law against exportation as a form of false patriotism, a bar to the diffusion of culture. More people would see old masters in America than in Europe, so they would do more good! And anyhow, he meant to use the money for the Spanish cause. If he had been able to explain that to the government, they would have given their consent. Since in this crisis he couldn't do that, he would take the liberty of acting for them—a characteristically American point of view.

He wanted to visit Madrid anyhow, and the upshot of the discussion was that he made the merchant a proposal: a cash purchase of the six paintings for three hundred thousand francs, exactly one-quarter of the price asked at first. The offer was conditioned upon Lanny's being able to reach Madrid and get the paintings into his possession. He drew up a contract by which he agreed to set out within three days, and have a week in which to arrive. The Señor gave him an order for the butler, and from the time he got the paintings into his possession they would be his risk and he would be obliged to pay for them.

This middle-aged and stout Spanish gentleman had his family cooped up in a small apartment and was in a state of distress, hardly able to pay his rent. There in Madrid under the bombs he had a variety of treasures, such as a gold and ormolu clock which had once belonged to King Philip IV; he offered this clock to Lanny for a thousand francs, about forty dollars, in cash. But Lanny said the picture deal would take all the money he could raise without inconvenience, and he wouldn't attempt to bring out anything that had value to marauders. The ordinary person wouldn't guess that the paintings had any special value—indeed might consider them as slightly demented works.

Lanny knew from days of old what opportunities of quick money-making were offered by a war. He had heard Johannes Robin tell about the sums he had made importing electrical apparatus through Holland into Germany, and he knew how the firm of "R and R," Robin and Robbie, had made fortunes buying up American military supplies in France after the armistice. Lanny had watched Zaharoff, Sir Vincent Caillard, Sir Henri Deterding, and others whom he had been meeting since childhood; now he would profit by the lessons—but doing it for a cause. He would become a sort of Robin Hood *Schieber*; a war profiteer who robbed the rich for the benefit of the poor. He believed that his cause was going to win; and so, when he came to be an old gentleman warming his bones in front of a fire, he wouldn't have to say with the pessimistic

Preacher that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

II

Beauty had considered it quixotic of Lanny to be taking Alfie and his friend to Madrid ; but Lanny had learned in Paris how the recruits for the International Brigade were getting to the war, being hidden in barns by day and escorted over the Pyrenees by peasant guides at night. A gruelling trip, for they stumbled and slipped in mud and perhaps slush, and it was easy to go over a precipice in black darkness. Men who were prepared to spend what was left of their lives in the trenches did not complain of such risks ; but men who had special education and training, whose services depended upon delicate reactions, might fairly be regarded as too precious to be exposed to November storms in high mountain passes.

They had written that they were ready, and now Lanny wired them to come ; the reply was that they would take a passenger plane from Croydon in the morning. He went to meet them, and the sight of the youngsters, eager though properly repressed, wrung his heart in secret. They were repeating the ancient pattern of man ; they were in search of adventure, and thought they were going to have their way with it. But fate would have something to say, and Franco's airmen, it might be. Each had his belongings in a duffel-bag, and Lanny made certain that warm sweaters were included, against the bitter cold they would encounter in Madrid.

"Everybody topping at home," they reported, and without further preliminaries got down to the problem of procuring visas for the forbidden land. You had to get French permission as well as Spanish, and for the Spanish permission you had to convince the authorities that you were Loyalist, while for the French you had to be ostensibly neutral, but with many of the officials it would help if you were believed to be a Franco sympathizer. For the French, Lanny had assembled a collection of business documents : his receipt for the motor-car commandeered in Barcelona, his contract with Señor Sandoval, and a letter from Señora Villareal saying that she would be glad to have him dispose of more of her paintings if he could obtain permission to bring them from Seville. This last would help him if by ill chance he and his party should fall into the hands of the Franco forces ; for Seville was Franco territory and the Señora was known there.

The Spanish side of the trick was turned by Lanny's Red uncle,

deputy of the French Republic. Lanny explained his wish to keep the role of a neutral, as always, and Uncle Jesse undertook to send his secretary to the Communist party agency which was smuggling volunteers into Spain. The secretary would state that two young English fliers wished to serve and had found a bourgeois person, a sort of fuddyduddy who bought and sold paintings and had agreed to take them as his assistants; when he got to Madrid he would find himself left to his own bourgeois devices. Such ruses are a part of war, and it is always war for the Communists. The three passports were stamped for Spain without their owners even having to put in an appearance.

III

Lanny spent the last night with his inamorata. He told her his plans, and promised to write often, using safe open postcards; everything vital would be in a code referring to paintings. Alfie would be Romney, because of a portrait of his great-grandfather which hung in his home, and Laurence needed a change of only one letter to make him a painter. The journey was dangerous and both lovers knew it; but danger had been a part of their bargain, and Trudi was not supposed to shed any tears. "Love makes it better when you are here, but worse when you are leaving!" she exclaimed. She gave him a last embrace in the doorway and then fled into the studio and shut the door.

Grim news in the papers at the beginning of this month of November; the rebel armies were within ten miles of Madrid at the south, and at about the same distance on the west; to the north-west the line ran out to the Guadarrama mountains some thirty miles away, and round them, made a great loop to the north and thence eastwards all the way to Huesca and Saragossa. The main rebel forces were approaching from the south and south-west, and here the Loyalists had made a heavy counter-attack and driven back the Moors, in spite of the fact that these turbaned defenders of Christianity had all the tanks and most of the planes in their support.

The three travellers didn't want to think about anything but these military operations. Alfie, who sat beside the driver, turned the dials, saying "Damn!" at jazz music, and freezing to attention whenever there was a news period. But the reports were confused and unsatisfactory; if the source was the rebel side, then Franco was sweeping everything before him, while if it was on the govern-

ment side, the enemy was being stopped with heavy casualties. The only thing on which there was agreement was the weather, which was delightful Indian summer.

Lanny travelled the *route nationale* he had used all his life between Paris and the Riviera. They would follow the course of the River Rhône as far as Avignon, and then swing off towards the south-west. There were three drivers, so they would take turns and keep going day and night, dozing in the car if they felt like it. But mostly they didn't; they wanted to talk about the war and what they were going to do when they got to it. They didn't even stop for meals, but bought food to eat as they rolled along. The sands of time were running out, and Madrid might be lost for lack of two capable fighter pilots!

They were going into a strange land and needed a new language. The two students had been working at it, but weren't sure of their pronunciations. Just as Lanny had done with Raoul, they now agreed to speak only Spanish, and with the little books they had brought they diligently learned sentences: "*Es esta la carretera para Madrid?*" and "*Quiero una habitación para dos personas.*" The books didn't give any Red or Pink sentences, but Lanny had learned the crucial ones, and taught them: "*Sah-lood!*" which was the greeting of all Loyalists, "*Vee-vahn los trah-bah-hah-do-rays!*" which meant "Up with the workers!" and "*Moo-ay-rah Franco!*" which meant the opposite. All three were used to studying, and put their minds upon it, even while they had fun.

For Lanny it was a chance to study the new generation. Life renews itself perpetually, but never quite the same. The old fall behind—and it appeared now that thirty-seven was old. However, the two youngsters were deeply grateful for Lanny's help and treated him as an equal. He perceived that world events which had so profoundly depressed him had produced in Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson and Laurence Joyce a moral and intellectual revulsion; they wanted a clean sweep of old ideas and old people; they wanted a complete social change—peaceably if possible, but any way it came was better than no way. They weren't Reds, but they weren't, afraid of the Reds, especially not in a time like this when men of action had to take charge. They didn't say it, because it might sound like heroics, but they hated the old world so intensely that they were willing to die rather than see it go on; they had looked each other in the eyes and discovered that determination and now they took it for granted, quietly, even gaily. Watching and listening to them, Lanny thought: "The social system is producing antibodies against Fascism."

IV

They reached the coast just after sunset, in time to see the blue water and the fishing-boats with red sails, and dingy cargo-boats of many sizes, trailing black streamers. It was night when they arrived at the border, and on the French side they were told that the fall of Madrid was expected at any hour, and did *les messieurs* wish to go in under such circumstances? Lanny showed the crudely written receipt he had got when his car was seized in Barcelona; he would go at least that far, and the young *messieurs* would drive it back. Most Frenchmen would understand such an errand and wish it success.

On the Spanish side, the little fishing-village of Portbou, it was different. Here the officials were highly suspicious of this invasion. To be sure, the *extranjeros* had proper visas; but such things can be forged, and often are. By the looks of them they might be Franco agents; and even when Lanny said *americano*, it didn't help so much, for there were reactionary *americanos*, especially *periodistos*, that is, journalists, who had sent out hateful reports about the people's government and the Frente Popular.

They were admitted, and set out for Barcelona. But in less than half an hour they were stopped by the *milicianos* of the road control and put through an inquisition. Very annoying, and dangerous, too, for it was night, and by the dim light of lanterns *extranjeros* look even more sinister than by day. Bourgeois persons coming to claim money from the Republic in its hour of direst peril—certainly that wasn't the way to make headway in Red Catalonia. After they had started again Lanny said to his passengers: "This won't do; we'll have to tell your story instead of mine."

"But won't that interfere with your work?" asked Alfy.

"Not seriously. These fellows by the roadside won't remember names, and so long as I become neutral when I get to Madrid I think it'll be all right."

So at the next post all three put on their most cordial expressions, raised their clenched right fists, and exclaimed "*Salud!*" Lanny announced in his most polished Castilian: "*Compañeros*, I am an *americano simpatizante*, taking two English pilots to the defence of Madrid." All faces beamed, all voices became exclamatory, and a succession of toil-hardened and sweaty brown hands were stretched out to be shaken.

Lanny inquired for the head of the political organization or the

local trade union. To that personage he stated their errand and produced the credentials with which the two young men had provided themselves: certificates from the English flying-school, and letters of recommendation from the secretary of the Socialist party group in their home neighbourhood. Nothing better could have been asked, and they were supplied with a proper *salvoconducto* which would spare them further annoyances.

Saving only those of hospitality! It was hard for Spaniards to realize that people were really in a hurry, even in war-time. "What is the news, Señores?" the *milicianos* would ask. "Can it be that Madrid is in danger?" Lanny avoided mentioning that he had a radio in the car, otherwise courtesy might have required them to provide a broadcast. They were urged more than once to stop for a meal, or at least a glass of wine; but they kept saying: "The time is short, *compañeros*." If the guards were youngsters they would answer: "*Buena suerte*." The older ones would speak more ceremoniously: "*Le deseo a Vd. toda felicidad*."

V

The route from Barcelona to Madrid was closed, because the rebels held Saragossa, the city where the Comendador had sustained his wounds. So they had to continue along the coast to Valencia. From there north-eastwards through the heart of the country, the government held control. This third largest city of Spain had been saved by hard fighting, of which many traces were to be seen. It was the port through which supplies were being taken to Madrid—such supplies as the Loyalists were permitted to purchase with their seven hundred million dollars' worth of gold. Alfy said: "I suppose the capitalist nations feel there is something immoral about a workers' government having so much money."

"Any money," said the red-headed "Laury," with a gleam in his mischievous blue eyes.

On the outskirts of this city of oranges and flowers they were escorted into the headquarters of an army officer who spoke some English and enjoyed practising it. Lanny's two reckless young friends explained their desire to fly for Spain, and presented their credentials. The officer gave them a pass to the capital, and for Lanny to return. They asked him for news, and he told them that a fleet of Junkers cargo-planes with German pilots were carrying Moors and supplies from Ceuta to Cádiz. He told them that the

Alfonso XIII, the largest hotel in Seville, was given up entirely to Italian officers ; at first they had worn civilian white duck, but now wore their uniforms openly. He told them that a ship from Russia had arrived in Cartagena, bringing pursuit planes which were being assembled by Russian technicians and would be flown to Madrid by Russian pilots. It was to be hoped they would arrive in time to save the city. The two Englishmen asked technical questions about the planes ; the army man could say only that they were single-engine fighters, and that on account of their snub noses they had been dubbed "*chatos*."

The three travellers were immensely cheered by this news about Russia. At last the silly bluff of "non-intervention" was being called. The Soviet representatives on the Committee had made formal announcement that if Franco's pipe-lines through Portugal and Morocco were not plugged, the Soviet Union would establish a line of its own ; and now they were making good this threat. "It may bring Britain and France into the war," remarked Lanny, and the stocky Laurence, who had a sharp tongue, responded : "On which side, do you think ?"

Through the intervention of the friendly officer they were able to fill their fuel-tank in Valencia, at twice the normal price. They were warned that they might have trouble getting petrol in the interior, and the conscientious Alfie was worried lest his friend be stuck in Madrid. He suggested that it might be better if Lanny gave up the trip and let them travel the rest of the way by train. But Lanny retained his faith in a bunch of five- and ten-dollar American bank-notes which he had sewed up in his trousers lining, just under the belt ; he said that at the worst he would donate another car to the cause of Spain.

The radio gave them news from the land of these highly valued dollars. The national elections had been held the previous day, and some forty million citizens had registered their choice. President Roosevelt had been re-elected, carrying all but two of the forty-eight states. Lanny said "Poor Robbie, he can have his way in business, but never any more in politics !" They talked about "the States" for a while, and Lanny explained the New Deal to the young Englishmen. It was making many blunders, he said, but was establishing the principle of public responsibility for economic insecurity ; also it was training a great army of social-minded men and women in the public service. "Nobody can run a government until he has learned about the machinery," opined Robbie Budd's heretical son.

VI

From the time they left Valencia they were rarely out of sight of refugees ; women, children, and old men fleeing from Madrid, or from the territories which the Moors had already taken. Those who owned vehicles of any sort or could hire them fled on their own ; motor-cars in all stages of disrepair, peasant carts, donkeys, even hand-carts, loaded with everything imaginable, pots and pans, bedding, bird-cages, and babies. Each family had loaded what it could not bear to leave behind ; but exhaustion forced many of them to change their minds, and the roadsides were strewn with objects enough to stock many junk-shops.

An old story on this old continent. All over its surface poor people and sometimes rich have been fleeing in front of armies as far back as the records of history go. It seemed worse nowadays, when people had grown soft and had come to take comforts and conveniences for granted ; even the poor had acquired notions as to their right to possess and to be undisturbed. Now their misery was spread out on the public highways ; one saw aged cheap motor-cars broken down or run out of fuel, old people staggering under burdens, babies crying feebly, children holding out their hands begging for food. Kind-hearted idealists were tempted to stop ; but if they meant to help win a war they had to toot their horn and keep going.

In the evening they reached Cuenca, least spoiled of ancient places. Lanny would have liked to stay and see the Old Town, built above the gorges of two rivers ; it had seven gateways, and a cathedral with famous grilles. But this temptation also had to be resisted. They inquired about the route, and were advised to strike through the mountains to Guadalajara, so as to approach Madrid by a road that was safe from possible raiders, safe especially from air-raiders.

On that night-ride the weather, which had been so fine, turned stormy, and they came upon a car which had skidded into a ditch and stayed there with a broken axle. It seemed likely to stay indefinitely, and Lanny had the bright idea to inquire if there was *la gasolina* in the tank ; by offering three prices he bought it. While the transfer was being made they stood waiting, and heard for the first time faint rumbling sounds in the west : artillery or bombs, or perhaps both. The two airmen had been getting ready for this and talking about it ; now they heard it for the first time in their lives. Lanny was an old hand, having been bombed in London

almost twenty years ago. The sounds gave them thrills not entirely pleasant, but of course they would give no faintest hint of that fact.

When they reached Guadalajara they found the highway crowded with refugees, even by night, so that it was no longer possible to travel fast. The sights grew more pitiful and the stories, if you stopped to hear them, more harrowing. It seemed in order to be passing through Alcalá de Henares, birthplace of Cervantes, with these sights before one's eyes. Few spectacles of human misery that unhappy writer had missed in his long life, and his sorrowful countenance companioned the three *extranjeros* all the way.

VII

The radio continued to be a jumble of claims and counter-claims; but they had found the way to make sure who was gaining—to note the names of places which came into the account, and compare them with the next day's names. In the car was a map of the capital and its environs, necessary for pilots to know in detail; now they learned that Franco had taken the Getafe airport, eight miles south of the city, and the Cuatro Vientos airport three or four miles west. A poor consolation to hear the government assertions that the planes and supplies had all been saved and the hangars and landing-fields dynamited. The radio station at Cuatro Vientos had apparently been captured intact, and now they heard it giving an account of how the Moors were advancing through the woods of the Royal Park, immediately west of the city. The Pink pilot in the car clenched their hands and fidgeted, saying: "We are going to be too late!"

Hoping for comfort, they turned to a government station and listened to an account of the bombarding of the beautiful red-brick buildings at University City by Franco's columns approaching along the Coruña road. Lanny told his friends how he had visited that inspiring place with Raoul Palma. Alfy exclaimed: "Franco would come that way, on purpose to wipe them out!" Lanny assented, saying that El Caudillo had just enough intelligence to know that the strongest of his enemies was modern science.

The sound of guns was never out of their ears, and the stream of fugitives was undiminished. Madrid was being evacuated, it appeared, and many gazed in astonishment at three perverse foreigners who persisted in going the wrong way. Lanny attached himself to a government truck apparently bound for the front; presumably the covered contents included ammunition, which made

them dangerous hosts, but everything got out of their way in a hurry, and the foreign pleasure-car came tooting along behind. So in clouds of dust if not of glory they raced towards the capital of Spain, by that same *Vía de Alcalá* on which Lanny and Raoul had left it four months previously.

They had talked out their programme. Lanny was not to be publicly known as having any connection with the two volunteers. They understood that the city was full of spies; indeed, General Mola, heading one of the advancing four columns, had boasted that he had a "fifth column" inside. So Lanny would drop his passengers in the neighbourhood of the Barajas aerodrome, each with the duffel-bag containing his belongings, and from that time on they would be on their own. Lanny would proceed to the Palace Hotel, and whatever they wrote him or phoned him would have to do with the marketing of art works; if they wished to meet him it would be at a pre-arranged place on a quiet street where he would pick them up in his car. He expected to stay only a few hours, for after he had got the six paintings into his charge he surely didn't want to risk getting bullet holes through them.

So *adios*, and don't forget your crucial sentence: "*Dónde esta el aeródromo?*" Don't forget to add: "*Muchas gracias!*" for this is an extremely polite people, to whom dignity and ceremony are of importance, even in the midst of battle. Lanny felt a tugging at the heart-strings as he saw those two pathetic-looking lads start out of sight, each with a bag over one shoulder. He knew he might never see either of them again; and anyhow, to go away is to die a little. The incessant thunder in his ears kept telling him that there was no peace or safety anywhere in this capital of Spain.

VIII

He registered at the hotel and had his car taken to the garage, hoping for better luck than under the same circumstances in Barcelona. He assumed that after nearly four months of war the government would have matters organized; moreover, it was a less Red government, even with the Socialists who had been taken into the Cabinet. Not wishing to do any telephoning from the hotel, Lanny went out and walked on the street until he found a public telephone in a booth, and from there he called the office of Raoul Palma, the only person he wished to see besides the butler of Señor Sandoval.

Raoul now had an important post in the Foreign Press Bureau. Because of his knowledge of the language he censored dispatches

for the French press, and also received those delegations of French workers who had been coming to investigate conditions in the new people's republic. When Lanny heard his voice he said: "This is your old friend the Comendador." Raoul would understand the need of speaking in code.

"*Bienvenu!*" exclaimed Raoul; and that, too, was code. "Where are you?"

Lanny told the location, and said: "I can only stay a few hours. Can I see you at once?" His friend was delighted, and told him on what street to walk so that they would meet each other half-way. "Watch out for bombs!" he added.

Lanny was glad to stretch his legs after so long a period of sitting in the car. The streets were not safe—but, then, what place was? The four columns of the Fascists were literally at the gates of the city on the west and south-west. Along that side there curves a little river called the Manzanares; at this time of year it is only about two feet deep, and in the summer Lanny had watched little children wading in it and sailing their toy boats. Such a river would not offer much of an obstacle to infantry, but there were parapets of stone and concrete sufficient to stop artillery and tanks. There were a number of bridges, and at four of them Franco's forces were about to attack, so his radio boldly proclaimed.

The Loyalists declared that the bridges were mined and would be blown up when necessary. Perhaps these were some of the explosions which shook the ground under Lanny's feet and made his ear-drums ache; evidently a full-scale attack was going on somewhere, and it might be that the Moors had already crossed the bridges and were marching the two miles or so which lay between the river and the *paseo* where Lanny was walking. At every street corner he took the precaution to look to the west; he tried to do it inconspicuously, for somehow it seemed to him that it was especially up to a grandson of Budd Gunmakers and son of Budd-Erling to show that he could "take it" as well as make it.

There were two human tides in these city streets, one moving eastwards, away from the firing, and the other moving towards it; both were moving fast, and Lanny appeared to be the only one who had leisure. Those moving westwards were armed men, some in uniform but most having to be content with armbands on their coats; many had guns, while others followed along, doubtless planning to use some other man's gun when he fell. There were women carrying picks and shovels to help in digging the trenches. Some had spiked clubs and pitchforks, even butcher knives which had been found so helpful in Barcelona. Few women wanted to live

after being taken by Moors. The government had proclaimed mobilization of all workers who were not engaged in making arms or ammunition, and now they were pouring out for the defence of their homes. Trucks were carrying as many men as could be crowded in or could hang on behind ; other vehicles were loaded with supplies for the fight.

Lanny kept looking ahead, expecting to see Raoul ; and there, less than half a block in front of him, an extraordinary thing happened. There came a screeching sound, followed by a huge burst of flame and smoke, and the whole side of a small business building flew to pieces or came tumbling down into the street in a mass of dust and rubble. Really, it was hard for a modern man to believe that a city, so permanent a part of his world, was being shelled and knocked to pieces ; but the conclusion seemed inescapable, and Lanny had a moment of panic, a strong desire to be somewhere else. But he thought : " Raoul might have been in front of that ! " so he ran towards the spot. A peculiar thing to look at a building and discover the front all gone, the rooms laid bare as you see them on the stage. Rooms with office furniture in them, and perhaps people, though you couldn't be sure on account of the dust and smoke. Strange odours, too, that come out of high explosive shells and get mixed with lime and plaster !

Lanny saw his friend running from the opposite direction, doubtless with the same idea that Lanny might be hurt. They fell into each other's arms with unwonted demonstrativeness, and Lanny said : " We might as well get away from here ! " They could have stopped for rescue work, of course, but they had no tools, and each had his own job already. " Shall I get my car and take you out of town ? " Lanny asked.

" Oh, no ! I can't run away from my work," declared the other.

" Well, let's walk in an easterly direction," replied Lanny, putting a smile on his face. They did this, but it really didn't make much difference, for the guns had plenty of range, and the explosions were all around them. " Is the enemy breaking through ? " he asked.

" I don't know for sure ; but it seems like an act of desperation when he starts shelling at random."

" I hope so. We had just about given up in despair."

" The workers are not giving up, I assure you. The International Brigade is coming—they have been training at Albacete, you know." Raoul went on, pouring out the news of this great moment in his country's life. Suddenly he asked : " What on earth are you doing here, Lanny ? "

His friend told about the two fliers. Raoul knew Rick, and had met the son once or twice at Bienvenu. Lanny asked him to look the youngsters up and do what he could to help them along. They might have trouble getting into the Barajas aerodrome, even with their credentials.

"They'll probably send them to Albacete," said Raoul. "The greater part of our air force has been moved there in the last few days."

IX

They had so much to talk about, and it was difficult, with shells bursting in houses and on pavements, regardless of who or what happened to be in the way. "This has been going on for the last two or three days," Raoul said. "Bombing by planes has gone on for as many months. It's really strange how you get used to it; you go on and do your work and take whatever comes."

Lanny guessed that this pose was costing no little effort on the part of his friend. On the trip he had seen tens of thousands of terrified people, and at the hotel he had been told that the government was on the point of moving to Valencia. But a few foreign correspondents were staying, and evidently Raoul was expected to stay with them and take his chances with the Moors.

In addition to all the sounds of gunfire they noticed a roaring overhead and, looking up, saw a flight of black bombing-planes, perhaps half a mile high; nine of them flying in wedge formation. Half a dozen fighter planes accompanied them, higher in the air, keeping watch. It was a nerve-testing moment when the bombers were at the proper distance, and you dreaded to see them drop their deadly eggs, and see those eggs coming straight at you. But it didn't happen this time; the squadron was bound for some more distant goal.

"Those big fellows are German Junkers," remarked Raoul. "We get to know them all."

Lanny said: "The pursuits puzzle me; they look like Budd-Erlings but they're not quite. Robbie never built a tail-assembly like that."

"Look! Look!" exclaimed the Spaniard. "They're fighting."

Sure enough; a couple of Loyalist pursuit planes had dived down out of a cloud, and there began what was known as a dogfight; the planes darting here and there, performing an extraordinary series of evolutions, each trying to get on the tail of some other. You saw the bursts of white smoke some time before you heard

the chatter of the machine-guns. Everybody on the street stopped to watch the spectacle; curiosity was greater than fear, and people bent their necks backwards and called out to one another, regardless of whether they had ever spoken before. There was loud cheering as one of the hated Nazi giants faltered, dropped out of line, and then plunged down, pouring out a trail of black smoke. Before it reached the ground it burst into flames, a highly agreeable spectacle to persons who were being bombed out of their homes.

When Lanny raised his eyes again the squadron had gone on to the east; but one of the enemy fighters was still overhead, and was behaving in a peculiar way, circling irregularly. "That plane is in trouble," Lanny said, and after watching for a few moments: "It behaves as if the steering-gear was stuck." It was one of those he had noticed because of its resemblance to a Budd-Erling. "Serves them right for changing the tail-assembly!" he added.

They watched with no little excitement. The plane was losing altitude, and apparently would be forced to land. "He's over El Retiro," said Raoul. It was the beautiful park of which the Madrileños were proud. "Do you suppose he can make a landing there?"

"I don't recall many clear places," replied Lanny. "Too many statues and fountains, and ponds, to say nothing of trees." They watched the plane out of sight behind the houses, and then Lanny exclaimed: "I'd give a lot to find it and have a good look! Do you suppose we could?"

"Why not?" replied the other. "It can't be far away, and so many people saw it coming down, there's pretty sure to be a crowd around it."

"I might learn something important to my father," Lanny explained. "He sold planes to Germany, and I warned him they would steal his patents; he wouldn't believe me, and it might be a good thing if I could prove myself right. But you'll have to come along with me, for it would seem a suspicious thing for a foreigner like me to be doing."

Raoul was exalted by the spectacle he had witnessed, and eager to see the outcome. He said that he had got somebody to take over his job for an hour, and if it proved to be longer, he would make it up later. They made note of the direction of the plane's descent, and then hurried to the hotel garage and got Lanny's car. They drove on the Paseo de Coches, which cuts across a formal and much-ornamented park; they saw people running, and came to a crowd gathered in a clear spot among some trees. Leaving the car and hurrying to the place, they saw a portion of one wing up in the tree, and the rest of the broken plane on the ground. They were

told that the flyer had been found unconscious and had been carried away. Now the crowd was being kept back by a couple of *milicianos* with red armbands.

Lanny had brought his camera from the car and followed Raoul, pushing his way through the crowd. The Spaniard announced his official position and introduced his friend as a "*periodista americano*." The profession of journalist justifies any sort of intrusion, so the militiamen bowed and said: "*¡Sí, sí, Señor,*" and Lanny went to work with speed and assurance to snap the plane from every angle.

It was a Budd-Erling, all right, but with modifications which Lanny was quite sure had never been made in Newcastle. With some help from Raoul he exposed the engine and photographed that. Lanny had breakfasted, lunched, and dined with the Budd-Erling "Tornado" engine every day he had spent in his father's home and he knew its every feature and the reasons therefor; he knew what parts to photograph, and where to look for the serial numbers of engine, carburettor, and other parts. When he finished he said to his friend: "Both plane and engine were made in Germany, and this camera film and these notes may be worth a thumping big sum to my father. What's more important, they may be the means of stopping him from trading with the Nazis."

Raoul replied: "I ought to be entitled to a commission for my help, wouldn't you think?"

"You bet your life!" Lanny took it seriously.

"All right, tell him I'll take one plane for my government!" Lanny grinned and promised to present the claim.

X

The shelling of the city continued, but Lanny found it as Raoul had said—you got busy at your job and forgot everything else. As they drove away from the park Raoul turned on the radio, and they listened to the labour-union station declaring that the enemy had not yet ventured his all-out assault, and when he did so he would be set back on his heels. Five thousand militiamen had arrived from Barcelona, partly by train and partly by truck; Russian tanks had come from Cartagena, and the enemy would no longer have a monopoly of these weapons; also the International Brigade had arrived at the Atoche Station and would soon be marching to the Toledo Bridge. "Give them a welcome!" said the radio voice.

Lanny commented: "Is it wise to give the enemy such military information?"

"He gets it in a hundred different ways," replied his friend. "This is a people's war—we have to give them courage and tell them what to do."

Lanny said: "I'd love to see that march. Where would it come?"

"By the Calle de Atoche," was the reply, and Lanny drove there quickly. They saw crowds ahead and heard cheering. "*La Brigada Internacional!*" It was a great moment in the lives of two idealists who had been running a school and writing newspaper articles and otherwise labouring to promote the idea of human brotherhood, and now suddenly saw that idea taking flesh, putting on boots, and marching with firm tread on a wide city boulevard. "The international party shall be the human race"—so the worker's hymn promised, and here were men from practically every nation of Europe and the Americas, having come of their own free will and impulse to help defend the Spanish people's Republic.

For a couple of months the left-wing press had been full of accounts of this brigade of heroes. It might be doubted if so small a body of troops had ever had so much publicity, for its ranks were made up in considerable part of writers and would-be writers, and from its training-camps had gone out first-hand stories in a score of languages, some of them having merit enough to gain space in capitalist newspapers and magazines. It was a dream stepping out of men's hearts and on to the pages of history. Each of these thousands of men had his own dream, and they put them all together and made one. It shook the pavements of Madrid, and shook the hearts of the spectators; it would shake the Nazi-Fascist dream of power, and would continue to arouse the souls of lovers of liberty and justice for the rest of time. Lanny thought: "This is the greatest sight I have ever seen in my life, and I ought to tell them so." He and Raoul got out on the running-board of the car and added their cheers to the clamour. To hell with the Fifth Column!

Like many another event which history deems important, this wasn't much of a show externally. These wool khaki uniforms had been used for drilling and digging trenches and crawling in the dust. Whole companies of the men had had no time to get uniforms, but marched in the clothes they had worn in New York or Havana or Budapest. A few wore the Spanish worker's costume, one-piece blue denim overalls known as *monos*, fastened with zippers down the front; Lanny hoped they had something warm underneath! But all had rifles and cartridge belts, and all wore grim expressions, knowing that this was no dress parade and that the enemy was only a couple of miles away. Most of the columns carried the red,

yellow, and purple flag of the Spanish Republic ; there were a few Red flags and Soviet flags, for it was an army of free opinion and free speech. Many groups had banners indicating the nation from which they had come, and Lanny watched the faces as they passed ; Raoul had told him that a number of students or former students of the school had enlisted, also some of the Italian refugees whom Lanny had aided in the course of the fourteen years of Mussolini's rule.

There came a *columna* with a banner reading *Thälmann* ; those were the Germans, named in honour of a Communist leader whom Hitler had in prison. Lanny scanned the rows of faces, for he had met many Leftists in Berlin and elsewhere, and might get some news for Trudi. He got it, indeed, for marching at the head of one company, wearing a captain's insignia, he saw a stocky, deep-chested Prussian with weather-beaten skin, dark hair shaved, and that peculiarity which seems to mark the North Germans, the absence of any curve from the back of the head all the way down the neck. Two years ago Lanny had studied that masterful face for an hour or two and had been thinking about it off and on ever since.

He called to Raoul : " Look at that officer ! Do you know him ? "

Raoul answered : " That is Capitán Herzog. Have you met him ? "

" I met him once," Lanny replied. He didn't try to say more, because of the shouting ; but after the last brigaders had marched by and the pair had got back into the car, he said : " I met that Capitán Herzog once in London under rather peculiar circumstances. He was going under the name of Bernhardt Monck."

" He called at our office, and said he had escaped from the Oranienburg concentration camp. He was in the German Army in the last war."

" I had doubts about him in my mind," added Lanny. " I couldn't feel quite sure whether to trust him."

" Well, you know now," replied the Spaniard. " No spies or traitors are going into that hot furnace, you can bet."

XI

Lanny said : " I hate to be running away in a crisis like this." But his friend replied : " There's not a thing you can do here, and you have your jobs outside. You'd better go while you can ; Franco might surround us entirely, and you'd be stuck for a long siege."

Lanny hadn't had time to tell his friend about the paintings. Now he said: "Raoul, I've got much the same proposition as we had with the Comendador. That turned out to be a genuine Goya, and I got twenty-five thousand dollars for it; I gave the whole amount to buy medical supplies which are doubtless being used here in Madrid now. I have another chance of the same sort, only these are French paintings, so I don't suppose they are properly to be classified as part of the national treasure of Spain."

"It's all right with me," said Raoul; "we need antiseptics more than we need art right now."

"All right, then; I'll take a chance on them. But there's one important problem—enough petrol to get me back to Valencia."

"It takes an official permit," said the Spaniard; "but I think I can arrange it. I have had to attend to it for some of the journalists. If you brought in two pilots, you're surely entitled to take yourself out again."

The Sandoval home was on the Plaza de la Independencia, a fashionable neighbourhood and a pretentious structure in French Renaissance style. Lanny rang the door-bell, and then rang again, and again, and again; his heart began to sink, for evidently the cowardly butler had run away. How was a stranger to get in and gather six examples of French Impressionist art from the walls of the salon? Lanny rang some more, and in between rings he kicked on the door most impolitely—but this was war-time. He was about to suggest that Raoul go to the next house and make inquiry when he heard a faint click and perceived that a small slot in the door had been pushed aside and one dark eye was peering at him.

"Buenos días," said Lanny. "*Es esta el domo de Señor Sandoval?*"

"*Sí, Señor,*" replied the eye.

Lanny explained in slow and careful Castilian that he had a letter from the master. He added: "You may remember me; I was here last summer to look at the pictures."

"*Sí, sí, Señor.*" The man started to unfasten the door, apologizing meanwhile. "The times are dangerous, and we have been living in the cellar."

"The master is worried because you have not written to him."

"We have been afraid to go out, Señor. The *anarquistas* are terrible men, and *Moros* worse."

The butler was a faithful soul, Lanny perceived. It had never occurred to him that he had a right to follow his master's example and run away. He had brought his wife and children and they had

locked up the house and were hiding away from bombs and shells, and still more terrible humans.

"Here is the letter," Lanny said. Probably the man couldn't read the names of the paintings, but he knew the stationery and the signature, and remembered Lanny's face. He allowed Lanny to select the paintings, each in an appropriate frame, and brought some old bedding in which they might be wrapped; he dutifully carried them down and stowed them in the trunk of the car, for which he received a suitable tip and gave suitable thanks, and then fled back into the house. The Plaza de la Independencia seemed to be right in the line of fire, and the sounds resembled a dozen thunderstorms all going at once. Their violence was reduced when you locked the house door, and more so when you locked the cellar door, and still more so when you put a mattress over your head.

There was only one thing more, *la gasolina*. Raoul told Lanny where to drive; he got the permit and Lanny's store of pesetas paid for it. "Now take my advice," said the Spaniard; "lock your doors and drive straight through. You'll have thousands of people begging to be taken in, but if you do it you may use up all your petrol and not be able to get more."

It seemed cruel advice; but war is like that. Lanny knew that the money he would get for the pictures would serve the cause; on the other hand, if harm came to the pictures, the debt of about twelve thousand dollars would handicap him greatly. Also, the undeveloped film in his camera might represent a coup for Robbie, and thus aid the cause, even if indirectly. "All right," he said; "I'll do that."

But he didn't.

XII

He put Raoul off a block or two away from his office, and then went to the Palace Hotel and paid his bill. This immense structure on the Plaza de las Cortes—eight hundred rooms and a bath with every room—was pretty nearly empty, except for a recently arrived staff of Russian technicians. More were promised, for apparently the Soviets had made up their mind to match the Italians at the Alfonso XIII in Seville. Here in Madrid the Palace had soft-footed waiters in black tie and tails to serve its guests, but had to apologize for the fact that its stock of coffee was entirely exhausted and the bread all gone for the day.

Lanny said his *adiós*, distributed his *propinas*, and stepped into his car. He locked the doors and closed the windows, all but the one

by his seat. Indian summer was over, and a freezing wind was blowing over the Castilian plateau, so he put on his overcoat for the long drive. He put his precious little camera into the canvas bag with his tool kit and tucked it away in the space under the driver's seat—the safest hiding-place he could think of. These things he did at top speed, for during the period since he had left the home of Señor Sandoval half a dozen bombs or shells had fallen near enough for him to feel the concussions, and the next one might hit among some French Impressionist paintings and force Lanny Budd into bankruptcy.

Free at last, he rolled eastwards on the Calle de Alcalá, which turns into a highway. The thunder died gradually, and as he ceased to hear the battle he heard about it. The Franco radio assured him that the real effort had not yet begun; what had so far been experienced was a preliminary bombardment, a process known in military terminology as "softening up." Within an hour after leaving the capital Lanny heard Radio Lisbon to the effect that a white flag had been raised over the Post-office building of Madrid. He ventured to doubt it—unless the action had been taken by some of that Fifth Column about which everybody in the capital was talking.

The road was crowded with fugitives, as before, and again he had to keep tooting the horn. He understood that one form of the class struggle is waged between peasants driving donkey-carts and tourists driving pleasure-cars; especially when there is only one tourist, and he locks up his heart as well as his car, and rushes on, scattering mud on both sides of the highway and leaving a stink behind. Lanny looked out for a government truck that he could follow, but apparently they were slowed up like himself.

Darkness found him among the mountains between Guadalajara and Cuenca, and here it was raining and bitterly cold, the road slippery and dangerous, and the need for caution extreme. Lanny had encountered one accident coming and now he encountered another going. A peasant cart had been struck by some sort of vehicle which had gone on without stopping to give aid. There was a family sitting by the roadside, a woman with a baby in her arms and three children huddled by her, the man standing in the roadway holding out his hands as if in prayer. There was barely room to get by the cart, so Lanny had to stop. He got out, thinking to help the man set the cart upright, but discovered that the donkey had a broken leg, which was the end of that. The baby had been thrown from the cart and might be injured; there sat the family soaked with rain and facing the prospect of freezing before daylight.

Lanny said: "All right, I'll take you, if you want to come." An

agonizing decision, over which they wept ; for here was everything they owned in the world, and somebody would steal it all. The cart ! Couldn't the Señor tow the cart ? No, the Señor couldn't, and he got back into the car and said "*Adiós.*" Then the woman came screaming ; the life of her little one might be at stake. She climbed into the rear seat with her baby, Lanny piling his suitcases on top of the paintings at one side. The other children clambered in beside the mother ; and what was the father going to do ? Stay with his cart and goods ? Who would help him to move them ? Who would have a donkey to spare in times like these ? And how could he ever find his family ? Santa Madonna, what was a poor *labriego* to do ?

Lanny said "*Adiós*" again, and the man stumbled forward, got into the seat beside the driver, buried his face in his hands, and shook with sobbing. With these precious belongings he could start life again, but without them he would be a pauper ! Lanny gave thought to the unfortunate donkey, and got out his Budd automatic. The peasant was dumbfounded ; he had never heard of such an idea. To drive a *borrico*, yes, of course, but to pity a *borrico*—what a mad foreign notion ! Lanny said : " Can you drive it ? No ? All right, then, why do you care what I do ? " He put a bullet into the poor creature's brain. The woman screamed, the children cowered, and they were afraid of him for a long while.

XIII

Lanny drove with his added load, remembering Raoul's warning about petrol. But he knew that Raoul would have done the same if he had been along. The car was full of unpleasant odours—for *labriegos* are bad enough in dry weather and in the open air, but when you wet them and crowd them into a tiny space they become something awful. They were all shivering with cold, so he couldn't suggest opening another window. They kept moaning and sobbing, telling Lanny things which he could only half understand, because of their old-fashioned words and turns of phrase which he had never heard. But there was something they had which required no naming—the Spanish *pulgas* ; it wasn't long before these active little creatures discovered the new pasture, and they must have found it especially luscious. Lanny was in torment ; but he told himself that it was war.

He had thought to unload the passengers at Cuenca ; but, " Who will care for us, Señor ? " they asked, and what could he answer ?

He knew that this least-spoiled of ancient towns had seven gateways and a cathedral with famous grilles, but did it have a public hospital? He didn't know, and there appeared no way to find out after midnight. His unhappy human freight knew they were hopelessly separated from their belongings, and now had but one thought, to get as far as possible from the war. Who could say when the dreadful *Moros* might appear in Cuenca? Outside, the night was dark, cold, and wet, but in this car it was warm, and never had they dreamed of such cushions or such safe and rapid motion. "If you please, Señor, will you take us as far as you will?"

So Lanny took them all the way to Valencia. It was warm there and the sun was shining; he bought food and milk for the children, gave the parents some money, and deposited them in a public park, already crowded with refugees. Misery loves company, and presumably the government would make provision for them all. They thanked him and he thanked them in return, for they had talked freely and taught him a lot about Spanish peasants. They had had a hard life and now expected only the worst, but still they had courtesy, and thought that a *Señor americano* who drove a self-moving chariot equipped with magical voices from Madrid and Barcelona and Seville must surely be at least a first cousin to the Heavenly Family.

Lanny drove to the Army headquarters and reported to the agreeable officer, told him what he had seen in Madrid, and got a permit to the border, also help in getting a final load of *la gasolina*. Then he visited a *botica*, and purchased some powder to protect him against both *pulgas* and *pijos*, and with this he liberally sprinkled his car, and himself inside his clothing. Also, he opened the windows and let the fresh breezes of the Mediterranean sweep the odour of charity out of his heavenly chariot.

Meanwhile the radio told him that the armies of Franco had begun their all-out assault on the Manzanares River line. According to where you turned the dial you could learn that the bridges had been blown up and that the International Brigade was standing firm, or else that the Nationalists were sweeping everything before them. "Nationalists" was the term that Franco had selected for his Moors and Foreign Legion, reinforced by Italian and German artillery, planes, and tanks; or perhaps it was a name which the capitalist press outside had invented for him; anyhow, he required all correspondents to use it, and threatened with dire punishment anyone who called his troops "rebels" or whose paper might insert that word in the correspondent's dispatches.

Listening to the civil war of the air, and finding it much more

pleasant to be in the audience than on the stage, Lanny drove to the border and re-entered France. At Perpignan he went to a hotel and had a bath with carbolic soap, and sent telegrams to his mother and to Rick, also one to Señor Sandoval, saying that he was mailing a cheque. He and Trudi had agreed that it wasn't wise for her to receive telegrams, so he wrote her a note saying that he was well and successful, but tired, after a six-hundred-mile drive without sleep.

He slept, and dreamed all night that he was hearing a dozen thunderstorms at once. In the morning he gave his clothing a thorough search and himself another soaping, and had breakfast, his first regular meal since leaving Paris. Then he arranged for the quick developing of his film, and with all the photographs before him he sent a night cablegram to his father, in a sort of code :

"Your friend Mister Obese who desired to lease patents has stolen them as I predicted have observed his phony in action obtained complete set photographs data including engine number forwarding registered mail retaining duplicates expect commission remember previous request do I get it proceeding Bienvenu. Lanny."

27

The Way to Dusty Death

I

IT would have been cruelty for Lanny to be so near his mother and not go and tell her his adventures. Moreover, there were business records he wanted to get, and Zoltan wanted a couple of Detazes to show to a client. So Lanny proceeded to Bienvenu, and the first thing was to have his clothing sent to the cleaners, and put some formaldehyde in a wash-basin on the floor of his car and lock them in to burn all night. Beauty was horrified by his entomological misadventures and made more fuss over them than over the bombs and shells. "*Nom de dieu !*" she exclaimed. "Don't let anybody know about it !" The fact that Spanish peasants lived with fleas, bed-bugs, and lice all their lives seemed to her a definite proof of the futility of trying to lift them in the social scale. It ought to cause Lanny to drop his alarming Pink notions once for all.

"Old darling," he said, "don't you think that if you paid them enough money so that they could buy insecticides, they might be glad to do what you and I have always done?"

So mother and son were launched on one of their arguments. Who was to blame for the war in the Iberian Peninsula, and who ought to win? Beauty agreed with her son's father that Alf's mixing himself into the mess was an unmitigated horror. Beauty had heard the stories of outrages from her fashionable friends, and was not to be persuaded when Lanny said: "No, dear, there have been no nuns burned in Spain; they have merely been deprived of the right to teach superstition to Spanish children." The most he could do by his arguments was to force her back to her old position, that war is wicked and that she was against it always and everywhere. "All right," he said. "Tell that to General Franco, who is invading Spain with an army composed almost entirely of foreigners."

"Lanny, you know I have no way to reach General Franco."

"Bless your heart, you aren't really that dumb—you just put it on when you don't want to face the facts. The Fascists are spreading their propaganda all over the world, and you are swallowing it because it's too much trouble to think for yourself and it's socially advantageous to believe what your rich and important friends tell you. But don't waste my time making me listen to their shabby second-hand tales, because I make it my business to know the facts, and when I tell them to you, you ought to have the sense to listen."

That sobered her somewhat, and she said: "You mean, Lanny, that the Reds haven't been killing their opponents all over Spain?"

"I mean nothing of the sort. There have been many killings, just as there were in the French Revolution and the Russian, and there always will be whenever you oppress and degrade human beings and force them to win their freedom by insurrection. Right now Madrid is under siege, and the city is filled with spies and traitors who have hidden arms and are waiting for the signal to rise. I haven't the slightest doubt that the Red militia is hunting them out and executing them, exactly as every army in the world always does with spies and traitors. It would be done in London or New York under the same circumstances. What we have to do is to judge which side stands for freedom and enlightenment and which for medievalism and superstition."

"Lanny, it's all too much for me!" exclaimed the mother.

He answered: "That's the first sensible thing you have said on the subject. So let's leave it there."

II

Beauty Budd had been first the *amie* and then the wife of a painter for a decade, and prior to that she had been a model and had lived among painters and listened to their talk. Also, ever since Lanny's birth she had known collectors of art and what was considered good taste in the decorating of homes. Now Lanny hung up the treasures he had brought out from under the bombs, and Beauty called in her friend Sophie and other rich ladies who chanced to be on the Côte d'Azur this early in the season. Lanny didn't tell what he had paid for the works, which had the effect of stimulating their curiosity. When the lively and somewhat loud Sophie inquired: "What do you expect to get for them?" he answered: "I don't want to plunder my friends, old dear." When she persisted, he said: "If anybody takes all six, he can have them for thirty thousand." She exclaimed: "Gee whiz!" and asked if he meant francs, but of course knowing better. Lanny was content to pass it off with a grin.

The price he had paid, three hundred thousand francs, represented approximately twelve thousand dollars. He wanted to get as much as he could for his cause, but of course he had his reputation to think about, and must not overcharge. He had in mind several persons who might take the lot, and he picked out the most likely and drafted a cablegram giving for each work the name of the painter, the subject, and the size, and adding an adjective which he felt would satisfy the purchaser when he came to unpack and examine what he had got. If it seemed to Lanny splendid and brilliant he said that; if it was representative and typical, he said that; if it was poor or commonplace, Lanny wasn't handling it.

He was on the point of sending that cablegram when Sophie phoned and asked him to wait. She and her husband had been talking about the collection and now she wanted to discuss the matter. When Lanny turned from the telephone his mother said: "She is a shark for bargaining; but she's lousy with money right now, so don't let her beat you down."

Sophie Timmons, of the hardware family of Cincinnati, once Baroness de la Tourette and now Mrs. Rodney Armitage, had just passed her fifty-eighth birthday, but hadn't celebrated it; her henna-dyed hair was getting thin, and she had wrinkles impossible to hide. All the old kinds of glory were gone, the old pleasures no longer brought any thrills. For many years she had been watching Lanny's profession and hearing him talk about great art in lofty

tones. From anybody else she would have taken it for a racket, but she knew that Lanny meant it and that he lived a dignified and comfortable life on the basis of his knowledge and taste. She had become acquainted with the idea that old masters represent a form of investment which is not affected by inflation or panics—at least, not permanently. She had seen perfectly commonplace people buy paintings and win consideration by showing them to their friends. With the exception of the Detazes, everything she had bought on her own hook had turned out to be a dud; but here suddenly was what looked like the real thing. In any case it would be something new to talk about—and, oh, God, how bored you do get when you have nothing to do but entertain yourself and have brains enough to see through the pretences of other people.

She had come with the intention of offering twenty-five thousand dollars for Lanny's collection. He told her: "I don't bargain with anybody, and least of all with my friends. I believe that I could get thirty-five or forty thousand by offering these paintings separately, and when I say thirty thousand for the lot it's to save time and bother. I have a client who I believe will send the money by cable. I am telling him that his is an exclusive offer, and the first. You know I didn't offer them to you—I just answered a friend's question as to what I expected to get."

It is a matter of prestige in France to get something off a price, and Sophie was disappointed and disconcerted. This was a new Lanny Budd; the little boy she had once known had turned into a firm and decided man of business. She hesitated for a while, frowned, hemmed and hawed, looked at the paintings once again, and finally went to the desk and wrote a cheque for thirty thousand dollars. "So much for business," she said, with relief; "now let's put them in the car and you show me how to hang them, and that will be fun."

That is the sort of thing that happens to you when you live in the rich world and cultivate the right sort of people. Beauty Budd had done it as a matter of business ever since she had known Robbie. He had taught her, and she had profited, and had done her best to teach her son. By these methods she had got him the most desirable of wives, but he had gone and thrown that treasure away. Now the mother couldn't resist the impulse to say: "You see, you do find it convenient once in a while to know some plutocrats."

"Yes, old dear," he responded, and kissed her on her soft and warm and well-padded neck. "I will sell them all the pictures they want, but I won't sell them either my brains or my conscience."

III

Lanny said : " I must be getting along. I have a date in Paris." Beauty knew he meant " that woman," and she plied him with questions, and had her feelings hurt because he no longer trusted his mother. Imagine, he hadn't even told her the woman's name ! He wouldn't show the woman's letters, and swore that he had never taken even a snapshot of her. It was mysterious and a bit frightening ; Beauty even wondered if this might be a sort of Marjorie Daw, a woman whom Lanny had created for the purpose of keeping his mother and her friends from trying to find him another rich wife.

He said No, she was a real woman ; but he had promised to keep her secret and he was keeping the promise. " Doesn't she want to meet your mother ? Doesn't she care to have your mother's respect ? " To this Lanny replied : " I'll tell her what you say, and the next time you come to Paris, maybe I'll bring her to you."

Beauty wanted to know : " Why don't you bring her here ? " She meant to be generous, as she had been in the case of Marie de Bruyne.

Lanny smiled. " There wouldn't be much of a secret after that, dear ! "

Another problem for a motherly soul : Marceline and Vittorio, having spent several months at Shore Acres, with a motor trip to California for diversion, were now on the way to Bienvenu by way of London. They would probably stop in Paris, and what was Lanny going to do ? He mustn't be rude to Vittorio, especially if he didn't want Vittorio to know he was a Pink or a Red. Family amenities must be maintained, and Marceline must not have to think that her half-brother disliked her husband.

" I'll always be polite to him," Lanny promised. " If he makes Marceline happy, I'll surely not interfere."

" You ought to talk to him, Lanny. You'd be surprised how many things you agree on."

" I was quite generous in the loan of my ears at Shore Acres ; but if there was anything we agreed on, I fail to recall it."

" Have you ever heard him talk about Hitler ? " "

" No, but I know that Hitler and Mussolini have patched up a deal over Austria, and they are fighting side by side in Spain ; if the Capitano had his two arms, he'd be helping his Nazi buddies there now."

" All the same, Vittorio says that the Italians dislike the Germans

intensely, and that their aims are utterly divergent. He thinks that to let Hitler get to the Adriatic would be a calamity for Europe."

"For Il Duce's would-be empire, no doubt."

"More than that. He insists that Hitler is utterly irresponsible and cannot be trusted to keep any agreement."

Lanny couldn't help laughing. "So they start a war that will give the moral lunatic possession of the iron ore of the Basque country and the Rio Tinto copper! No, no, darling, if I'm going to get along with my Fascist brother-in-law I'll have to take my stand in an ivory tower and maintain a lofty contempt for the sordid subject of empire-building."

IV

Franco's four columns hadn't got into Madrid. The International Brigade had stopped them at the river, and was holding that line through day after day of bitter fighting. The rebel general, who had expected to sweep everything before him, was greatly annoyed, and his backers, who had expected to get a lot for almost nothing, raised a frantic clamour, charging that the Reds were keeping a cruel war going. The Reds, on the other hand, maintained that if it weren't for the Italians and Germans there wouldn't have been any war, and that now, if their aid were stopped, the fighting would be over in a week. It was obvious to all disinterested persons that the great majority of the Spanish people wanted the government they had peacefully elected. The war which was being forced upon them was a world civil war, at least in its propaganda, and nobody could tell at what moment it might flame into a conflict worse than the one which was supposed to have ended eighteen years ago.

Driving to Paris, Lanny listened to the battle of words on the air. All news was propaganda now; you had to learn the special views of each station and discount its brand of falsification or suppression. The little nations were afraid of the big ones, the fat and prosperous nations were afraid of the lean and hungry ones. The Catholics were afraid of the Nazis, but still more afraid of the Reds. Labour couldn't make up its mind which it feared more, Nazi-Fascism or war; which it loved more, freedom or peace. There was an endless complexity of party opinion, class opinion, sect opinion, all fanned to white heat by the pressure of a desperate emergency. Whatever you believed, you believed with passion; whatever you wanted done had to be done instantly or else it would

be too late. Under such conditions, those who have their way are those who know what they want and grab it; and unfortunately these were Lanny's enemies, never his friends.

In a world thus drifting to destruction he had found one firm place of anchorage, and that was Trudi's heart and mind. With her he would never have to argue, from her he would never have to conceal anything; the one-room studio on the Left Bank had become the place to which his thoughts turned whenever he had a moment's leisure. When he was trying to make money it was for Trudi to spend, and when he succeeded he thought what fun it would be to tell her. Lanny had been brought up by women, and as a result he was strongly inclined to admire them and to be influenced by them; he had been what was called a ladies' man—and here was a new type of lady, one who wouldn't be easily recognized as such, for she lacked the conventional arts and graces. But Lanny decided that the real way to be a lady was to have self-possession and moral firmness, no pretences, and a mind which penetrated to the heart of a problem and separated the true from the false. Whatever name you gave to that sort of companion, it was most convenient to know where she lived and to be sure that she would open her door to you.

V

What, precisely, is the etiquette of love with a saint? How do you approach a woman who is so concerned about the woes of the world that she forgets her own existence? Lanny wasn't sure, but he knew at once when he saw her standing in the doorway with a look of gladness upon her face. He came in, shut the door, and asked no questions about either her or the world; he put his arms about her, kissed her, and said: "I love you." He kept his arms there, and said: "I love you" a number of times. It would have seemed unoriginal and monotonous to anybody else, but it answered every purpose; she was happy, which was what he aspired to make her, and had promised to try. It was really quite easy; and if to go away is to die a little, to come back is to be revived more than a little.

Later they sat upon the couch, still with one arm about the other—to make up for lost time—and he told his adventures. She shuddered at the military details but not at the entomological; she was a different kind of lady, and said: "What goes with poverty all over the world. We found it among the children of the labouring classes in Berlin." She was much excited about the imitation

Budd-Erling, taking seriously Lanny's suggestion that Robbie might reward him with a plane. But the son of the great establishment smiled wistfully and said: "Don't count on that. If Robbie gets anything out of it, he'll buy some Budd-Erling stock for me—but no aeroplanes for Spain!"

When he told about Beauty's desire to meet her she was troubled. "Oh, Lanny, I couldn't do that! What on earth would I say to your mother?" He replied: "That's easy. Talk about my mother's son!"

He had got more money; and what were they going to do with it? Trudi had two loves, and found it hard to choose. Spain or Germany? Lanny reminded her: "Anything that is going to be done for Spain has to be done quickly."

She answered: "Yes; but if we can make the German workers realize what is happening, they will refuse to make arms for Franco or to ship them." She was still clinging to the idea that there was a strong movement of class-conscious workers in Hitlerland who might be aroused to action. Lanny believed it no longer, but couldn't bear to tell her so. She had written another tiny pamphlet, explaining the siege of Madrid to the German people, and he said: "Go ahead with it. We'll save some money for that."

There had come a postcard from Albacete to Bienvenu, signed "Romney," and saying: "We have found highly interesting subjects for sketches, but good paints seem to be unobtainable here now. If you can manage to get some, it will be appreciated." That was code, of course; it meant that Alfie wanted a Budd-Erling Pq. Lanny had forwarded the message, with his interpretation, to the dispenser of these favours. Now he told his *amie* about it, and said: "I've no idea it will influence Robbie, but at least it will trouble his conscience. I plan to do some inquiring here in Paris, and see if I cannot get on the track of a plane of some sort."

VI

Lanny went to see his Red uncle, who had helped to get the young pilots to their goal and therefore was entitled to a report. Lanny told his story, but not mentioning what he had paid for the pictures or that he had already sold them. He knew that Uncle Jesse's propaganda was a bottomless pit, and he preferred to give his money to the Socialists.

The Communist deputy revealed a curious development. The mass meetings of the workers and their incessant chanting of

"Aeroplanes for Spain" had not been without effect; it couldn't be otherwise in a democracy, where the politicians are at the mercy of the voters every few years. The continuing exposure of German and Italian aid to Franco had made the word "non-intervention" a stench in the world's nostrils, with the result that Blum was beginning to weaken in his "neutrality." Weakening was all that was required, for there was incessant effort on the part of Loyalist sympathizers to smuggle arms across the border, and a great part of the rank and file of the French Army, as well as many of the petty officials, were in sympathy with the attempts.

Léon Blum couldn't come out frankly and say, as did the Russians: "We intend to supply arms to the Loyalists so long as Germany and Italy supply them to the Rebels." That would have meant a break with the British government, and would have left France a "Red" nation. In a world of hypocrites, who can be honest? There are men with cash trying to buy arms, and there are other men who lived by selling arms, and it's not easy to keep them apart. If the arms are stopped at the border, there is always the possibility that somebody is expecting a *pourboire*—and, the world being what it is, maybe he has a right to it. The salaries of French civil servants are notoriously small, and if a poor fellow can pocket a few francs and at the same time help a cause—*sapristi!* In the morning the arms have disappeared, and if any complaint is registered, there are capacious pigeon-holes in the office of every bureaucrat in France.

Uncle Jesse revealed that a French novelist and heart-and-soul sympathizer with the Loyalists was buying arms for the Spanish government. He had an apartment in Paris, full of art treasures, and he was selling these, and spending the funds and perhaps other funds for planes—of which, being a pilot himself, he was a judge. Lanny had an impulse to go to him; but at once he was confronted by the same difficulty which had tied him hand and foot in New York. Such a man would live surrounded by Fascist spies; and how could an American with rich connections go to him and give him money without having it known? To say nothing of earmarking the purchase, saying: "I have two pilot friends at the Albacete airport and I want to make certain that this plane goes to them!" A man might as well imagine that he could drive up to the Arc de Triomphe, dig a hole under it and blow it up with dynamite, and not have anybody ask his name and address!

So Lanny would go on doing what he had done for years, giving a little here and a little there. Some to Trudi, as she called for it; some for the school in Cannes, which had a new director; some to

Longuet for the paper; some to Rick for the job of waking up labour in England; some to Hansi and Bess for the same purpose in New York. And always: "Put this in as your contribution, and don't mention me!"

VII

Zaharoff had moved to the hotel which he owned in Monte Carlo; earlier than usual, because his old bones craved the sunshine and dreaded the November chill. Madame had been lent to Olivie Hellstein, who had once been Emily's guess at a proper wife for her foster-son. Now Olivie had a French husband and half a dozen children; but one of them had "passed over," and the mother had learned about the Polish medium and now enjoyed every day a harmless exchange of nothings with the alleged spirit of her little one. Also, there was Olivie's uncle Solomon, who had died of mistreatment by the Nazis, and this stoutish elderly banker "came through" at intervals, showing a most astonishing knowledge of the family banking business in all the capitals of Europe, and discoursing freely on the problem of anti-Semitism in the spirit world. There were no Nazis in that world, he declared, because nobody would have anything to do with them; where they went he had never been told.

Madame was lent about like that in Paris and London fashionable society. It never seemed to make any difference what house she stayed in, provided that people were kind to her. She could always entertain herself with two packs of cards; and every day, for exercise, she strolled to the nearest kiosk and bought a cheap popular magazine or newspaper, her criterion being that it had an abundance of pictures. The strange gift by which she earned her living played but a small part in her personal life, and she got a little tired of having to assure people that she didn't know how it had come or when it would go, if ever.

Trudi had been thinking a lot about this problem in Lanny's absence. He had lent her Osty's *Supernormal Faculties in Man*, and it had been dawning upon her mind that this universe is far more extensive and complicated than Karl Marx had dreamed. She said: "Lanny, I wonder if I could try Madame again and see if Ludi has anything more to say."

Lanny replied: "Sure thing," for he and his mother ranked as the Polish medium's discoverers and therefore had the first call.

He phoned to Olivie and went for the old woman, and got the:

same room in the hotel just round the corner from Trudi. He had decided to try being present, sitting off in a corner and hoping that Tecumseh wouldn't notice him. Trudi came in and seated herself in the chair which had been placed in front of Madame; the latter went into her trance at once, and there was a silence, while Trudi tried the experiment of concentrating upon the thought of her former husband and wishing him to appear.

But this was not Ludi's afternoon. Suddenly Tecumseh said: "There is an old man here, a stranger. He wanders round looking frightened. He seems to want to talk but he can't."

"What does he look like?" asked Trudi, to be polite.

"He is very, very old. I believe he has just come over. He has a funny little white beard at the point of his chin and it waggles. I believe he is looking for you, Lanny." There was no use trying to fool the Amerindian chieftain by sitting off in a corner. If you were there, you were there, and you had better behave yourself.

Lanny obediently brought up his chair; and when Tecumseh asked: "Do you know any such person?" he answered at once: "I know one, but he is not in the spirit world."

"You can never know who is in the spirit world," declared the deep voice with a Polish accent. "It takes but a flash to carry you across, so do not be so cocky. This old man—I know him, too. Years ago you brought him to me, and he was frightened and ran away. Don't you remember, the Unknown Soldier came and talked to him, and the men who had been killed at Verdun yelled at him, and there was a terrible racket of guns—he said that he made guns and then he ran away from the sound of them!"

"I remember very well, indeed," replied the grandson of Budd Gunmakers. "If that old gentleman is here I would be more than glad to talk with him." He looked at Trudi and she at him, for here might be a real phenomenon.

"He says he is looking for his wife. He doesn't want to talk to anybody else. He calls her Maria. Is that correct?"

"That is one of her names."

"I thought maybe he was calling upon the Virgin. There is a very strong Catholic influence here. Is he a Catholic?"

"I don't think so; but she is."

"The old man is weeping, and tears are running down his cheeks. He seems quite distracted and I don't think he knows what I say to him."

"Tell him that Lanny Budd is here. He knows me very well and you gave me many messages for him in the past."

There came a pause, and then a feeble voice: "*Mon garçon!*"

Was it delusion on Lanny's part that it bore some trace of the voice of Zaharoff? Certainly it had traces of the voice which Tecumseh had made out of the voice of Madame Zyszynski. The explanation commonly given was that the spirits were using the vocal cords of the medium. That sounded silly, until you stopped to ask yourself: "How does any person use his own vocal cords?" An idea forms in your mind, and instantly it becomes a vibration of your vocal cords. Air causes cords to vibrate, you say; but how does an idea cause a current of air to move? Somewhere in the process, non-material idea creates material motion; but how that can happen is something beyond the power of the wisest scientist to explain or conceive. Lanny could argue: "The same process that made it possible for Zaharoff to use the vocal cords of Zaharoff might make it possible for him to use the vocal cords of Zyszynski."

VIII

Anyhow, here, he was, the old spider, the old wolf, the old devil, calling to Lanny Budd in tones pitiful beyond description. A feeble voice, yet it seemed to represent tremendous effort, and it couldn't be sustained more than a few words at a time. "Lanny, I cannot find her. Tell him! Tell Tecumseh! I must have help! I am lost here!"

"Do not worry so much, old friend," said Lanny, trying to soothe him. "Things will be easier in a little while. You are new to this world, I suppose."

"I have been here before . . . looking for her. But . . . I cannot stay. She is gone, Lanny. She is dead!"

"You are confused, my friend. She has been dead a long time."

"She has died again!"

"But that does not make sense. Can anybody die a second time?"

"Why not? If once, why not twice? She is gone! I cannot find her . . . never . . . never again!"

Another silence, and Lanny said: "Talk to him, Tecumseh. You can see that the old man is suffering greatly."

"People shout at him," declared the chieftain, "just as they did before. Nobody wants him here, and that frightens him."

"Are the spirits so unkind, Tecumseh?"

"You do not understand our world. It is their nature, which works in spite of them; he feels it and it shrivels him up. He is trying to talk to you, but he cannot find the energy."

"You have so much energy ; please find out what he is trying to tell me."

A pause. "He is trying to talk about his will. He thinks it is very important. He is troubled because he did not leave you anything."

"Tell him I never expected anything from him."

"He thought you did. He says he never understood you."

"That is unfortunate, Tecumseh. I was only trying to be kind. I tried to help him find his wife. Tell him that."

"He says he never knew whether to believe anybody. And now it is too late."

"Tell him it isn't. We will help him, you and I and his other friends."

"He keeps crying and says he has no friends. He used to have a great deal of money, but now he has nothing and nobody pays him honour. He says that he feels naked."

"Take charge of him. You are such a powerful person yourself."

"Stop trying to feed me taffy. This old man punishes himself and nobody can stop him. He says something about a deal ; papers that he had to sign this morning. He came over very suddenly. He is worried about it. He doesn't trust his heirs. He doesn't trust you or me or anybody. What was he ? Some great criminal ? He wrings his hands and screams that he wasn't. He says : ' If you knew what I had to do to get bread when I was young—and it wasn't good bread, either ! ' "

IX

Such were the last words, at least for a long while, from Sir Basil Zaharoff, Knight Commander of the Bath of Great Britain and Grand Officier de la Légion d'Honneur de France. Tecumseh fell silent, and presently Madame stirred, and opened her eyes and sighed. "Did anything go wrong ?" she inquired, in a dazed way. "I feel strange."

"One of the spirits was unhappy," said Lanny.

"Ah, that always upsets me."

He offered to get her some wine and biscuits: She was a temperate person ; she would drink one small glass of wine and nibble a couple of biscuits, and then a delightful thought would begin to stir in her slow mind : the cinema round the corner ! She always sought American pictures ; she had had a hard time in New York, but America was wonderful and its pictures much the

best. Lanny laid a twenty-franc note on her knee and said : " When you have seen the pictures, take a taxi to Madame Olivie's. And thanks for your help."

" *Bonjour, Monsieur Lanny.*" Her cinema-trained mind suspected a romance between these two fine-looking persons, and she would carry their images with her and blend them with the happenings on the screen.

Meanwhile, Trudi and Lanny hurried out. They had the same thought, hardly needing to speak it. Was Zaharoff dead ? " If it's true, Lanny, it's incredible ! " she exclaimed ; and he chuckled. It phrased so perfectly the instinctive reaction to these phenomena of the mental underworld. If it wasn't true it was easy to understand, but if it was true it just couldn't be !

Lanny said : " An apparition came to me once, and I knew it was real. I feel the same way this time. The old man was due to die, of course."

They walked to a corner where there was a kiosk, and there were the papers with the news spread on their front pages : " Zaharoff dies." The ex-munitions king of Europe had suffered a heart attack in his bathroom early that morning and had died in the arms of his faithful valet. He had been known as " the mystery man of Europe," but the papers had managed to find out a good deal about him, and after their custom had had it all ready to put into type for the early afternoon editions. Lanny asked the woman at the kiosk : " How long have you had these papers on sale ? "

" About half an hour, Monsieur."

He said to Trudi : " That disposes of any idea that I might have seen the headlines without noticing them consciously. As a matter of fact, I think they would have caught my attention, for Zaharoff has always been important in my life. I have known him and watched him since I was a small boy ; he fascinated me because he had such power, and I wondered what it meant to him and what was really going on inside him. He became to me a sort of Sunday-school sermon on the futility of great riches."

" Something made him into that at our séance," she commented.

" Possibly my subconscious mind. But there had to be some flash from outside to tell me he was dead. I certainly wasn't thinking about him—I had my mind all set on Ludi and was rooting for him to come."

" That business about his will, could that have been in your mind ? "

" The old man was besieged by legacy-hunters, and of course I knew he must be thinking I was one. That was the curse of his

great fortune: he couldn't keep from having the thought about every man or woman who came near him. My guess is the duquesa was the only person he ever trusted in his life. That is why her loss crushed him so and the pursuit of her became an obsession. He punished himself, just as Tecumseh said a while ago."

"*'Denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden,'*" said Trudi, quoting Goethe.

The body of the great man was placed in a metal casket, lead inside and silver outside. The hearse which carried it stole out of Monte Carlo at four o'clock in the morning, followed by a guard car, and arrived at the Château de Balincourt at midnight. There, for some reason which was never explained, the casket was held for five months, and then one morning there was a funeral service in the chapel of the estate, attended only by members of the family and the servants. Extending from the pond in front of the château was an avenue of poplars, and at the far end of this a mausoleum in which lay the body of the duquesa; now her husband was laid beside her. It was as he had ordered, and was perhaps the best that man can do in the presence of so mysterious and humiliating a phenomenon as death.

A couple of years later it happened that Lanny was strolling in Paris, and curiosity led him to number 53 Avenue Hoche. The mansion, in which he had watched the munitions king of Europe burning his private papers and setting fire to his chimney in the process, now stood empty, with its blinds tightly drawn. A gendarme paced silently back and forth in front of it, and Lanny engaged him in conversation. Who owned the house now? The man did not know. Lanny mentioned Zaharoff, and the man looked blank; he had never heard that strange foreign name. Byron has asked: "What is the end of fame?" and here was the answer!

X

Vittorio di San Girolamo arrived in Paris with his wife and put up at one of the smartest hotels. According to his promise, Lanny went to call on them and found that a year of rest and play had brought the colour back into the young Italian's cheeks. They told about their trip to California, and Lanny told about his to Spain—making it strictly non-political. The Capitano saw the Spanish struggle as the first step in the suppression of a world-wide labour conspiracy which had its source and centre in Moscow. The Capitano was obliged to accept Hitler's help in this task, but, even so, he

despised and distrusted the Führer, just as Beauty had declared. Lanny was able to agree, and they got along amiably enough.

Marceline sought an interview with her brother alone, and it turned out that she wanted money. Irma had generously given her a cheque in Reno—they had stopped there both going and coming, it appeared—but the money was nearly all spent, and how were they to live? Lanny explained that Zoltan had a chance to sell two of the Detaze paintings; if and when he did so, one-third of the price, less the commission, would go to Marceline. She wanted Lanny to advance it to her now, and he had anticipated the request and had made up his mind to say No.

Lanny's half-sister was just nineteen, the loveliest creature you could imagine, dressed at the peak of the autumn fashions. She had been brought up to elegance, and now she was going to have a hard time doing without it. Lanny observed the effect of only a few months of being on her own; it seemed to have hardened her visibly. Her needs were urgent, and she went after what she wanted with slight consideration for decorum. She knew that Lanny made a great deal of money, and what did he do with it? Why couldn't he give part of it to a sister who was burdened with a crippled husband? Lanny told her that he had incurred many obligations; but he couldn't or wouldn't tell what they were, and the pretext seemed lame. Surely those paintings in the vault at home could be sold, and surely she, the painter's daughter, had something to say about them! Couldn't he make more of an effort to get rid of some?

Lanny explained patiently that the making of the Detaze reputation was a labour to which he and Zoltan Kertezsi had applied their knowledge and skill over a period of some fifteen years. It was with paintings as with other commodities—if you proceeded to dump them you destroyed the market, perhaps for ever; whereas, by releasing them carefully, one by one at high prices, you increased the value of what you had left. By this method Marceline would be able to live in comfort the rest of her life on her share of her father's works.

"But I need money now, Lanny!" she exclaimed. "How are Vittorio and I to live?"

He answered: "Go down to Bienvenu and stay, and adjust your expenditures to your income." But he knew that the words were wasted, for Marceline had had a bad teacher. Beauty Budd had rarely lived that way, and wasn't doing it now, in spite of adjurations of husband and son. As to Marceline, Beauty would consider that a girl was entitled to have her "fling" while she was young, beautiful, and popular; she had to take part in what was called "the

social whirl," and it meant going with fast-spending people and keeping up with their standards. To be poor was like being dead.

Lanny knew that Beauty would give Marceline money, and that pretty soon both would be in debt. He had made up his mind to get tough, and to be horrid, right from the start, and he did so. The result was a one-sided quarrel, Marceline doing it; Lanny wouldn't get angry, even when she scolded him for his folly in throwing away the most generous of wives, who had been willing to take care not merely of him but of all his family. They parted, with Marceline in tears, and few signs of that sisterly affection which had marked their relationship through the years.

XI

After coming to an agreement with Joseph Barnes, Lanny had written a letter to the lawyers who were to represent him in Reno, specifying the terms of the divorce settlement. He had sent a cheque covering their fee, also the cost of two cablegrams, the first to acknowledge receipt of his instructions and the second to inform him when the divorce was granted. Early in the month of December he received the second cablegram, and next day he read the news in several of the Paris papers. So that episode in his life was closed, and he was a free man after seven years and a half.

Doctor Samuel Johnson once remarked that a second marriage is a triumph of hope over experience; and Lanny quoted this saying to Trudi when he took her the news. "I think we ought to get married," he declared.

"What good will it do, Lanny?"

"In the first place, I could help you better if you should ever get into trouble. You could gain American citizenship after only one year's residence, and that might be important to you."

"I didn't know about that," she admitted.

"Also, it would give you economic security. As it stands now, if anything should happen to me, you would be stranded."

"I could go back to work, Lanny, and would expect to."

"It's not so easy for a refugee to get work, and it wouldn't leave you much strength to give to the cause. I have my share in Marcel's paintings, and some stocks and bonds in my father's keeping, and I should want you to have these and use the money for our fight. It would be absurd to leave it to my daughter, for it would be only a drop in a bucket, and she wouldn't even see the splash."

"Wouldn't your mother want it?"

"My mother is provided for, and would know nothing to do with more money but to spend it for fashionable clothes. The same is true of Marceline; and with the world ready to burst into flames, I can think of more important things to do than to fit exquisite silk fabrics upon pampered female flesh."

"Lanny, they would hate me horribly!"

"For a while, perhaps; but neither of them is malicious, and my mother, at least, has learned in course of the years that she has an erratic son. In her heart she blames herself, because she brought me into the world a bastard, and she was reared in the strict Fundamentalist faith that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. Whatever goes wrong, an inner voice tells her that God is punishing her, and however hard she fights against this notion she cannot escape it."

"Lanny, how can we possibly get married without publicity that would make my work impossible?"

"I believe there are ways it can be arranged. You know you can be married under another name."

"And still have it valid?"

"The only question in the case of a marriage is whether or not you are the person who was married."

"Would you tell your mother and father?"

"That would depend upon what you wished. I could write my father a letter, explaining the circumstances and enclosing a photograph of you; I would seal the letter and mark it to be opened only in the event of my death. He is an honourable person and would put it away in his safe-deposit box."

"It all sounds very formal and forbidding, Lanny; but I suppose that is the way when you own property. Let me think it over."

XII

A couple of days passed; and one morning, while Lanny was indulging in the luxury of reading the papers and a couple of English weeklies before he got up, his telephone rang, and it was the voice of Trudi, speaking English, quickly and sharply. "Listen carefully, and don't use any names. I am being followed. I can't go into details, but I think it's something bad. Don't go near my place."

"Where are you?" he asked.

"I am phoning from a public booth. I was afraid you might come to see me."

"What do you intend to do?"

"I have to shake them off."

"Listen to me." He had given some thought to being followed and what to do about it. "Stay where there are crowds. Don't go into any room alone or on to any lonely street. You understand?"

"Yes."

"The best place is some department store or public place which has many exits so that they can't watch them all. Zigzag here and there in the crowd, stoop low, and move fast; dart into an elevator suddenly, or go into the Métro and dart into a train—or out again after your pursuers have entered. If you can't manage it any other way, appeal to a gendarme. Put it on the basis of sex; the man is a masher—the French word is *un suiveur*. While the gendarme is reading him a lecture, you step into a taxi."

"All right."

"When you have got clear, phone me and tell me some corner to come to. I'll have transportation ready."

"All right. Thanks."

After that Lanny didn't do any more reading or lolling in bed. He ordered the hotel to get his car, and he put some of his clothes on and more into his suitcases. He called for his *addition*, and when he got it he sent the boy downstairs with a large *chèque*; they had known him and his mother over the years, and would give him the change. He was going on a journey, and wanted enough.

In between these details he paced the room like a caged tiger. Do these creatures see visions of the jungle and the delights they are missing? What Lanny saw was visions of Trudi Schultz, alias Kornmahler, in the hands of the Gestapo; he lived over again the horrors he had experienced in the case of the Robin family and then in Trudi's own case. This glorified gangster system which had stolen the name of Socialism had reached out from Germany into everyone of the border states; it had reached into Spain, and now its slimy tentacles were stealing down into the hiding-places of its escaped victims in France.

Lanny thought about the Nazis in Paris and what they could do. It was a complicated matter, and one had better not count too much upon the French authorities. In every great capital of Europe, indeed of the world, the secret agents of the Right were fighting those of the Left, and there was a strong tendency for the police of every city to work together against what they called "subversive elements," regardless of the political colour of their own government. Thus in Paris, even under the Front Populaire, the Sûreté Générale and the Deuxième Bureau tolerated the activities of the Nazi agents, and even gave them information and help—in strict confidence, of

course. It was a part of the policy that was coming to be known as "appeasement," making friends with Hitler on the theory that, being in power, he had become responsible and that it was his mission to put down Bolshevism for the benefit of all the imperilled capitalist states.

Lanny had explained this situation to Trudi. She could go up to a gendarme on the street and say: "I am a decent woman being persecuted by this strange man, and will you kindly instruct him to let me alone?" But she couldn't say: "I am a German Socialist refugee, being spied upon by a Nazi agent," for then the poor gendarme would begin to quake in his boots, knowing that he was in the presence of higher powers, a possible scandal, something that might break him. The woman might be an anarchist or a terrorist, and perhaps it was his duty to escort her to the nearest *bureau*. Those who sit at the desks in such places have been there a long time and are set in their ways; it would be a blunder to imagine that they are going to change just because a Jewish aesthete with a gift for writing *feuilletons* has pushed himself into the premiership of France for a few weeks or months!

XIII

At last the phone, and Lanny sprang to it. Trudi's voice, now speaking French with a cheerful society accent. She was having luncheon in a small café in the Passy district. She would be happy to have his company, and he said: "*Tout de suite, Mademoiselle.*"

It wasn't long before he had her in his car and began turning corners of obscure streets to make sure they were not being followed. Meanwhile she poured out her story. For a couple of days she had noticed that her place was under observation. There was a tobacco shop just across the street, a natural place for men to be lingering about; and of course the fact that a man followed a good-looking woman on the street didn't necessarily mean the Gestapo—especially if the woman made a practice of looking behind her as she walked. But when it was a woman who took to following her, and turned half a dozen successive corners behind her, lingering to look in shop windows whenever Trudi looked in shop windows, then she came to the decision that her enemies had her marked. What caused her alarm this morning was three German-looking men in a motor-car—and she remembered how they had murdered Hugo Behr in Munich and kidnapped Lanny on the same occasion.

She had used Lanny's suggestion of a department store. She had

found a bargain counter and had bowed her head and forced her way through the crowd, to the great indignation of many shoppers, volubly expressed ; emerging from the throng and dodging behind one counter after another she had managed to get out by a side entrance unpursued. " Oh, Lanny, I do hope I haven't got them on to your trail ! " she exclaimed, and went on to reveal that she had recently helped in the purchase of some radio valves and other equipment for the use of a secret station which was broadcasting from various places in and about Berlin. The Nazis were sparing no effort to locate it. Trudi said : " I am afraid my days of usefulness in Paris are over. "

They were beyond the city and travelling on the St.-Denis road, the main highway northwards. She noticed the signs and asked : " Where are you taking me, Lanny ? "

" To England, to marry you, " he replied.

He put the car into a garage at Calais, because it would make them too conspicuous. They crossed on the ferry to Dover, and rode on a bus in humble tourist fashion to one of the near-by watering-places, pretty well deserted in December. They strolled along the promenade, Lanny carrying two suitcases. The houses nearly all had signs indicating lodgings for rent, and they selected a clean-looking place, and under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Rudd engaged by the week a bedroom and sitting-room, with use of a bath, for a very small sum. For other small sums the landlady would purchase food according to their order and would prepare it and serve it in the sitting-room. By paying for the coal they could have a grate fire all day and most of the night. The rooms were stuffy and loaded with mid-Victorian furniture and gimcracks incredibly ugly ; but the art of love made up for the absence of all other arts.

XIV

The longest nights of the year were at hand, and the season of storms and fogs ; but young and vigorous people enjoy walking in the rain, especially when they have a warm dry place to return to. Among the things which Lanny had tossed into his suitcases were some books. One was *The Most Haunted House in England*, by Harry Price, a psychic researcher who went round with all the weapons of modern science and who set down a series of observations in an English rectory which would leave you stumped if you had any idea of the meaning of evidence.

Another was *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, the reading of which was to Lanny Budd like repeating a section of his own life over again. Poor old Stef! He had had a stroke soon after this book had been published, and had died not long ago in a bungalow on the Californian coast. Lanny read his story aloud to Trudi and told her about those days at the Peace Conference, where Stef had been a friend and guide to a nineteen-year-old secretary. He had gone on a mission to Russia for President Wilson and had come back saying: "I have seen the future and it works." He had laboured to stop the war of the allied nations upon that newly born future; but now, after nearly eighteen years, the war was still going on. "It may be we shan't live to see the end of it," said Lanny sadly.

They read together, and it was a holiday they both had earned. Trudi, of course, worried about the problem of whether her confederates had been discovered by the Gestapo, and what would happen to them, and how she would manage to establish contact with them again. Lanny didn't worry about anything, because the ravens had always fed him, and he was sure that a flock would come swooping down out of the sky at the proper moment.

They had only one pair of visitors. Lanny persuaded his fiancée that Rick and Nina ought to be entrusted with the secret. In some time of emergency they might help by offering a hiding-place, forwarding mail, obtaining publication of important news—Lanny revealed for the first time that it was Rick who had handled the documents about Nazi rearmament which Trudi had obtained. Now, with their son committed to the cause in Spain, the loyalty and discretion of this English pair could surely be trusted. Trudi assented, and Lanny dropped a mysterious note to Rick, asking him and Nina to motor to this address without saying anything about it to anybody else.

Rick was used to such notes by now, and the two of them came, and took their friends out in the car so as to talk freely. This was romance, also adventure, and the baronet's son and daughter-in-law enjoyed the day even more than they permitted themselves to reveal. They had been worried about Lanny, considering him far too trusting and susceptible to feminine wiles; they had feared that Beauty and Emily and Sophie and Margy would succeed in their efforts to trap him into another fashionable marriage. But it was evident that this capable and clear-headed woman would never let him stray into the primrose paths of the leisure class.

Lanny knew about getting married in England, having made detailed inquiries in his elopement with Irma Barnes; the marriage

act of 1836 had not been altered since 1929 ! After he and Trudi had been "in residence" for fifteen days he paid a visit to the marriage registrar of the district and made a declaration concerning himself and his future bride. He gave their names as Landon Preston Rudd of New York, divorced, and Gertie Corning, a widow of Zürich, Switzerland, desiring to be married according to English law. After a lapse of twenty-four hours he came again to obtain the licence, and shortly thereafter, a day or two before Christmas, Trudi became his wife. Lanny took a picture of her, the first time he had done that—for he could never know when his papers might be searched. He had one print made and then destroyed the negative. He wrote a will in her favour, and put the will, the photograph, the marriage certificate, and a letter to his father into an envelope which he sealed and marked: "To be opened in the event of my death." He put this inside a larger envelope and sent it by registered post to Robbie. To cheer Trudi up after these testamentary details, he kissed her and quoted: "'How much the wife is dearer than the bride!'"

28

So Money Comes Withal

I

TRUDI wanted to go back to Paris; she had to go, in order to find out what had happened to her fellow-conspirators. Even supposing she was going to work in some other city, she couldn't start except through some contact with the underground organization. It was like a network of mining-tunnels extending under the greater part of Europe; in order to get into them you had to know where to find one of the shaftheads.

Trudi's shafthead was a middle-aged musician who had been a clarinetist in one of the leading Berlin orchestras. He was a Socialist party member of long standing, and now earned a few francs every day by giving lessons in Paris, mostly to children; he lived in a miserable garret, and handled with the utmost secrecy the large sums of money which Trudi brought to him. She had never told him how she got them, but he had known Freddy Robin and no doubt assumed that the money came from that family. The clarinetist

turned Trudi's manuscript over to a French Socialist printer, who put it into type in his own shop at night ; not knowing a word of German, he made many errors, but these were patiently corrected. He purchased the paper, here and there in small lots so as not to attract attention, and his son, also a party member, did the printing, and slept in the shop with a gun under his pillow.

So it was a well-kept secret ; and when the jobs were done, the bundles were turned over to a labour-union official who saw to the distributing. Members of the railway engineers' union would take them in their cabs as far as the German border. The Nazis never permitted foreigners to run trains into their land, but there were old-time Socialists on the German train-crews to whom bundles were entrusted. Also there were comrades among the lorrymen who handled goods imported into Germany from Holland and Belgium and Switzerland ; there were working-men, miners and others, who came and went between France and Germany, and would carry leaflets in the bottom of their dinner-cans. In one way or another, the free workers of the border states kept a stream of literature filtering into Naziland ; and when a German worker, whose organization had been wiped out and his newspapers *gleichgeschaltet*, got hold of a collection of facts from the outside world, it was more precious to him than a lump of gold ; he passed it round to everybody he could trust, and a single piece of paper would be read until it was worn ragged.

The Nazis were countermining all the time, of course ; their agents would come among the German workers, posing as loyal comrades and knowing all the lingo. They would win the confidence of some naïve man or woman and penetrate into some group ; then, in the small hours of the morning, the Gestapo would descend upon the homes of all persons involved, search their belongings, and carry prisoners and evidence to their headquarters. After that in the underground dungeons the torturing would go on for days and weeks. Human flesh would be mutilated and human nerves racked, until some weak one would give way and name the leaders—or perhaps in his desperation name some perfectly innocent persons, anybody, anything, to escape from unendurable pain.

Such was the deadly conflict now going on in the land which had once been the land of Goethe and Schiller, of Beethoven and Bach. To Trudi and Lanny it was a struggle over the future not merely of Germany but of civilization. For four years now the Nazis had been getting ready for war, while talking peace and reconciliation they were going ahead day and night, bending every energy of a great industrialized nation to military preparation on a scale never

before known in history. Under their system there were no longer any personal rights of any sort ; the State was everything, and the State was a Moloch, a brazen monster with a belly full of fire and a wide gaping mouth into which were to be fed the whole product of German industry, and the bodies, minds, and souls of all Germans at home and abroad.

The unsettled question was, would the German people stand it ? Could their dissenting elements be suppressed and all traces of opposition destroyed ? If so, then a dreadful war was certain. The world outside was blind and couldn't be made to see it. The business of the outside world was making money, and nobody seemed to care very much where or how—ask Lanny's father about that. Lanny's father advertised the claim that he was making the deadliest aeroplane in the world, and he had sold the Nazis as many as they would pay for. If they hadn't bought large numbers, it was because General Göring intended to make a better plane, availing himself freely of Robbie's ideas and disregarding entirely the existence of international patent laws.

To the son and the new daughter-in-law of Robbie Budd it appeared that he was helping the Nazis to destroy everything in the world that was precious, the whole cultural and moral heritage of mankind. What the Nazis meant to do to the rest of the world they were showing clearly in Spain, a sort of laboratory in which they were testing their plans and their propaganda, as well as the various new instruments of slaughter they were contriving. Everything that worked would be used, and that which failed would be discarded and destroyed—human material as well as military.

So to the young couple, and to thousands of their way of thinking, it appeared that the destiny of mankind was being decided along the line of the Manzanares River in front of Madrid, and in those new academic buildings in University City which were now serving as fortifications against wild and bloodthirsty Moors. That was the military front ; and the propaganda front, no less important, consisted of a secret radio station which was telling the German people the truth night after night, and bundles of anti Nazi literature which a handful of devoted men and women were smuggling into Hitlerland and placing in dinner-cans or under the door-cracks of German workers' homes.

II

Trudi never went back to the studio on the Left Bank. Her few possessions there were not worth the risk involved in recovering

them. "Start over again," Lanny said; "as if there had been a fire." She rented a somewhat more roomy studio in Montmartre, using her latest "maiden name" of Corning. She promised to exercise the utmost caution, never going out except at night; Lanny would do her shopping and bring her supplies, always parking his car some distance away and watching carefully to make certain that no one followed him.

She wrote a note to her clarinetist, whose name she had not told Lanny. She told the man to be in front of a certain building at a certain hour of the night, and to use every precaution to be alone. Lanny was to drive past in his car, with Trudi in the back seat, the curtains down and only a small place to look through. If the man wasn't there, they would drive on. If he was there, Lanny would turn a corner and let Trudi out of the car; then he would drive round the block and pass the spot again to make sure that she was all right. Lanny would have his Budd automatic along, for surely no Gestapo agents were going to kidnap his wife without shooting.

This was a critical moment in Trudi's affairs, for if her confederate had had to disappear like herself, they might have had trouble finding each other again. But there he was, and Trudi got out and joined him, and Lanny saw them strolling along a dark street and had to assume that everything was all right. She told him afterwards that the clarinetist had taken alarm and moved away from his home just as she had done, leaving everything behind him, including his beloved instrument. But one of his pupils, a clever French lad, had gone and got his mail for him; so they had got a fresh start, and would play hide-and-seek with the Nazis for a while longer. Neither would have the other's new address, but they would meet at an agreed place once a week. Trudi had slipped him a wad of notes, and told him to use some of the money for his personal needs.

Such was the game of cross and doublecross which was being played all over Europe and indeed all over the world: Nazis and anti-Nazis, Fascists and anti-Fascists, Spanish "Nationalists" against Loyalists, Reds and Pinks of every shade against Royalists, Croix de Feu, Jeunesses Patriotes, and politicians for sale to whoever offered the highest rewards in jobs, publicity, and cash. When you took part in that game it was like leaving the civilized world and going back into the jungle where fierce beasts stalked one another and would start at once stalking you. There was no limit to the treacheries, the stratagems, the traps; you pitted your wits against creatures who had nothing to think about but outwitting you, and very soon you found that if you were going to survive you could think about nothing but outwitting them.

III

Among the messages which Lanny had found awaiting him at his hotel in Paris was an old one from his father, saying that he was sailing for Germany and suggesting that Lanny should meet him in Berlin. It would have been interesting, but rather sickening, Lanny decided ; to listen to his father wrangling with that " Mister Obese," like two jackals over a carcass. Not even the fact that Lanny was entitled to a bone out of it could cause him to enjoy the spectacle. He sent Robbie a telegram to the Adlon, and a few hours later received a reply saying that his father was returning by way of Paris and would meet him in a couple of days. Robbie added : " Bringing bacon get out frying-pan "—which was a kind of code, unless you had lived in America.

" Change and decay in all around I see "—so declares a much-loved hymn, and the sad words applied to Lanny Budd's relations with the first and greatest hero of his life. More joyful than Christmas, far more fun than birthday parties had been those days when a telegram or postcard had arrived at *Bienvenu* saying that the brilliant and adored salesman of munitions was on the way. That had been true in boyhood and youth, even in early manhood when Lanny had packed his bags and driven to Paris or London to meet his father. But now the years had rubbed all the glamour away ; Robbie Budd's calm assurance, his manner of commanding everything he wanted, his regal prodigality in distributing largess—all that seemed crude and second-rate. It was obvious that Robbie drank too much whisky for his own good, and when he began telling Lanny about the world they both lived in, he revealed himself as an opinionated and ill-informed victim of the acquisitive instinct.

But it had become Lanny's duty to meet many such persons, to hear them talk and understand them as products of their environment. In this case it was his duty to hear his father's story and collect all possible information regarding Germany's war preparations, especially in the air and especially over Spain. All this would make the basis for another article by " Cato," the pen-name which Rick was now using in one of the English weeklies. Incidentally, Lanny would put in his claim for a pursuit plane, and while he wouldn't get it, he might be able to pry a considerable sum away from his father's work for the benefit of his own.

Considered purely as a story, the one which Robbie Budd had to tell was rather magnificent. When he had first got Lanny's cablegram about the stolen patents he had been furious, and still more so

when the data had come and he had made sure that Lanny was right. But on the steamer the man of affairs had thought it over calmly and recalled the ancient adage about molasses compared with vinegar as a bait for flies. After all, what was Budd-Erling in business for? Not to provide its president the luxury of quarrelling with a fat egotist. Much better to play ball with him and get a large cut in the gate receipts—thus Robbie Budd, talking American.

He had approached the benedicted commander in the role of the skilled munitions salesman, one who has good goods to sell and is much troubled because a customer is not placing the expected orders. "You know, Hermann"—they had got on those terms of intimacy—"I cannot keep a fabricating plant going without orders, and it has certainly proved a useful thing for you that Yankee ingenuity has been turned to making speed and manoeuvrability in aeroplanes."

Yes, the fat Hermann could assent to that without loss of dignity. The Budd-Erling was an excellent product; but it was very expensive, and Germany was a poor country, having been plundered in the international fraud called reparations—

"Listen, my friend," said Robbie Budd, "you and I are grown men and must treat each other as mental equals. We both know that Germany stopped paying reparations very quickly. Germany borrowed the money from our banks—my brother-in-law's Newcastle bank among them—and if I were to ask when you plan to pay, you would no longer enjoy my society." The bulky General, now Feldmarschall, had a sense of humour, and grinned.

"But he didn't enjoy what came next," said Robbie, telling the story in high good spirits. "I told him that I appreciated his position, caught with this Spanish war on his hands, and so much more costly than he had anticipated. Naturally a plane has to be tried out in battle and corrected in a hurry when its faults are revealed. So I provided him with an alibi—he could still talk as one gentleman to another. You should have seen his face when I began to reveal my knowledge of what he had done to the Tornado engine, and the new tail-assembly he had put on to his imitation of our Pg. I had enlargements made of your photographs, which were remarkably clear, and our experts had studied them, and I had every smallest detail exactly right."

"Did you show him the photos?"

"I didn't even tell him what I had got, or where, or how. I left him to suppose that I must have got the blueprints out of his own drawing-office. I gave him the engine number and other numbers, telling him that I knew he had been shipping these to Spain and fighting them there with his picked men. Of course that made it

much worse from his point of view ; no doubt he's been shooting some of his top-flight men, or at any rate frightening them to death."

"And what did he say ? " It was up to Lanny to show appreciation of this melodrama.

"I took the sting out of it deliberately. I let him know that I hadn't come to quarrel with him ; I considered that he was helping me as well as himself in keeping Bolshevism out of the Western world ; but I expected him to understand my position equally well. I had to keep a plant going, and some day it might be a fortunate thing for him that planes were being turned out in a neutral country where he could buy all he needed."

" ' I'd never be able to,' he said ; ' the British would blockade me.' You see what is in his mind."

"That's no news to me," replied the son.

"I answered that it wouldn't be long before we'd have planes with the ability to fly the Atlantic, and after that the British wouldn't be blockading anybody. ' You can be sure,' I said, ' that Budd-Erling is one plant where you will be able to trade on equal terms with anybody. I'm no lover of the British—they have been my trade rivals all my life, and if I should tell you the tricks they have played on me I could take the rest of the evening.' "

"And what then ? "

"He didn't fail to realize that I had the making of a scandal ; I could give him a black eye that would keep American business-men from ever trusting him. But I had no desire to do that—I just wanted a fair share of what he was getting out of the Spanish war, both in profits and experience. And believe me, I got it ! "

"You think he'll keep the bargain this time ? "

"So far as his blueprints are concerned, probably not. He has agreed that from now on we are to work together to improve the plane and that I'm to have everything new that involves our patents or is derived from our Budd-Erling ideas. There's plenty of ground for dispute there and he'll no doubt cheat me all he dares ; but he can't get out of our contract, so far as payments are concerned. He pays four times the royalty he offered me a year ago, and he agrees to pay cash on delivery for twenty planes a month for at least five years and as long thereafter as he continues to use our principles. That means that we're on easy street."

Lanny would have liked to say : " It means that you're in the red-light district." But it wouldn't have done any good. He waited for his father to come to the part of the story which had to do with himself.

"That was a valuable service you did me, Lanny, and I'm proud of your quick wit. It puts me in a somewhat awkward position, because you're my son. What I'm going to do is to call a meeting of our directors and tell them the story and put it up to them. My guess is they will vote you somewhere between ten and twenty thousand dollars of Budd-Erling stock."

"Well, thank you," said the son. "You understand, of course, I'd much rather have one or two planes, and the firm would save money."

"No, it wouldn't. You know perfectly well what it would do to us if a Budd-Erling plane were to appear in the air over Spain on the wrong side. I'm sorry as hell for those two boys, but it's their own doing, and I can only hope and pray to God that you are not committing yourself to that crazy adventure and compromising the name of your family."

IV

Robbie told about events at home. The American people were in a panic over the possibility of being drawn into the war; the American people were "isolationist," demanding to stay at home, mind their own business, and let the rest of the world destroy itself if it chose. The newly elected Congress had met, and its first step was to plug a hole in the Neutrality Act, making it apply to civil wars as well as other sorts. From now on no military supplies could be shipped to either Insurgents or Loyalists.

There had been a rather comical race between Congress and a freightship called the *Mar Cantábrico*, which had been loading two million dollars' worth of cartridges and aeroplanes at a Brooklyn pier. The army, according to its practice, had sold at auction a lot of used aeroplane motors, and these had been bought by parties unknown and were believed to be on board this vessel, bound for Valencia. The port authorities did everything they could to delay the sailing, and the captain and crew resisted, even to the extent of a scuffle on the deck. The vessel departed in a hurry, leaving some of the aeroplanes behind, and was followed by Coast Guard speedboats and a plane, on the chance that the bill might be passed and signed before she was too far away from shore. When she was nearing Spanish waters, some German or Italian warship might intercept her, or some unknown submarine sink her, and then what might the dignity and honour of the United States government require us to do? The people remembered how their dignity and honour had got them into the last war, and were very much afraid of these appurtenances.

Father and son discussed these problems while driving out to spend the night with the de Bruynes. The new act wasn't going to make much difference to Robbie, because he could sell his products to Germany, Italy, and Portugal. But Robbie was opposed on general principles to having politicians telling business-men what they should or shouldn't do. Every such interference was an encroachment upon the American enterprise system—so Robbie had taken to calling what his son referred to as "capitalism." Now, once or twice the father called it "democracy," and this amused the son, who all his life had heard Robbie denounce democracy as the greatest danger confronting his native land. But times had changed, the New Deal had been re-elected, and American big business-men had decided to establish capitalism and democracy as one and the same thing.

Lanny had been neglecting the de Bruyne family for some time. Now he was glad of a chance to listen to Denis telling Robbie the inside story of French political life: all the blunders the Blum regime was committing, and the steps which the two hundred families were taking to counteract them and bring the Front Populaire to confusion. When the younger men talked, as they did freely, Lanny was submerged in that powerful current of reaction which had seized the wealthy and aristocratic youth of Europe. They so hated and feared the Left that they were forgetting old national antagonisms, and it was possible for two young Frenchmen to look with hope to a man who had called for the annihilation of France. Class was more than country!

Both Denis, *fil*s, and Charlot had been seeing a great deal of Kurt Meissner, and so, without meeting his old friend, Lanny could follow his trail in Paris. In the days when Kurt had been Beauty's lover he had held the culture of France to be decadent and had kept himself deliberately aloof from it; but now he sang the praises of *la vieille gloire française* and declared that all Europe looked upon it as a fortress under siege by the barbarian hordes of Moscow. Kurt talked against the alliance between Russia and France, which he called an act of treason to Western civilization. As a personal friend of the Führer, possessing his confidence, he was assuring all Frenchmen that their efforts to overthrow the traitorous Leftist government had the Führer's full sympathy, and, if need be, would have his aid. Germany wanted to bury all the ancient grudges and join with France and Britain to build a new world order, based on frank and free co-operation of the superior nations, and the superior classes within those nations.

Kurt didn't make speeches along this line or appear in any

political way. He was a *Komponist* and piano virtuoso who sometimes played his works in drawing-rooms of the élite. There he would meet some master of a supple French prose style, and would inspire a chapter in that fastidious gentleman's new book. He would meet the publisher of one of the big dailies and give him Hitler's assurances, and next day that powerful person would call in his staff to receive a new editorial directive. Or perhaps it would be a leading capitalist of the Comité des Forges, whom Kurt would so move with indignation at the secret aid being sent from France to the Spanish Reds that he would make a large contribution to the war-chest of the Croix de Feu. This and the other French Fascist organizations had been dissolved by order of the Blum government, but they were going on with secret work and had kept the streets of Paris in a turmoil.

V

Lanny told about what he had seen in Spain, making it a purely business trip; Robbie told about the interview with Göring, but suppressing Lanny's part in this affair. As a stockholder of Budd-Erling, Denis, *père*, was glad to hear of a financial triumph, while as a French patriot he was worried by the evidence of German efficiency and drive. He said that Germany was building a brand-new military machine, and was now having a chance to test out everything and train her technicians in actual combat. He had been told by an officer of the French General Staff that Göring was following a definite policy of giving his fliers a couple of months in Spain, then bringing them back to become instructors and sending a new lot to get the practice.

"It is a terrible thing to say," declared the *père de famille*, whose hair had now turned white, "but I am afraid the Germans are a coming race while ours is declining. Our Army is in a serious state of inefficiency and depressed morale. What can we expect with a Jewish internationalist and pacifist phrase-maker at the head of the government?"

Poor Blum! Lanny thought. He had been in office only seven months, but that was time enough for the condition of the French Army to be laid at his door! But Lanny couldn't say anything; his role required him to sit in his ivory tower and let the de Bruynes run France.

"Of course, I know that the trouble dates back further," admitted the troubled man of affairs. "We forced Germany to disarm at Versailles while we kept our own weapons; with our native frugality

we still think they are weapons, and nobody can bring us to face the fact that they are junk."

That sounded like a lead for Robbie, who began talking about the errand which had brought him to Paris. What was the prospect of persuading the new French Air Minister to place an order for Budd-Erling Pro's, which would embody certain improvements based on the Germans' experiences in Spain? The contract which Robbie had with Göring was no secret—on the contrary, he showed it to Denis, with the idea that Denis would tell influential officials about it. The fact that Göring was going to have twenty of these new planes every month ought to cause the French to desire at least fifty.

But the owner of Paris taxi-cabs shook his head sorrowfully. As a patriot and a stockholder he would be glad to see Budd-Erling get a contract, but as an insider in French public affairs he had to report that the new policy of "nationalization" had thrown the aeroplane industry into a state of confusion; also that the Air Ministry was hopelessly committed to the policy of what they called "prototypes." They designed and built and tested the best planes possible of every type, got all the tools ready for quick manufacture, made enough planes for practice, and then felt that they were safe. "Again our native frugality!" said Denis. "Planes get out of date so fast that we cannot bear to make a lot of them, knowing that they will be surpassed in a year or two."

"But that means that in time of need you will have practically no planes," said Robbie, to whom such talk was a personal grief. "When war comes nowadays it will come overnight, and the first places to be bombed will be the factories where you have those prototypes."

"*Dieu sauve la patrie!*" was the Frenchman's reply.

VI

Robbie Budd came back to Paris, to do what he could to wake up Marianne. Then he would go to London and try to prod John Bull. The German contract was a powerful lever, and he would send Johannes Robin and make sales to smaller countries on the basis of it; but the French would stick to their programme, and the British Air Force officers who had to do with purchasing would hem and haw, and discount the enthusiasm of their young fliers—what are middle-aged brass-hats for but that? They had been doing it to Robbie Budd for more than thirty years, and their monacles and

Sandhurst manners gave him what he called a pain in the neck. They were gentlemen, and would scrupulously refrain from stealing his patents ; but Robbie rather wished they would, so that he could have an excuse for talking to them straight. " It will take Mr. Obese to wake them up," he wrote to his son.

Just after the father left Paris, Lanny received a cablegram from his mother, forwarding one from Irma at Shore Acres. Irma informed Beauty that she had just been married to Caddy Wickthorpe, and added that she was coming to England to live ; thus Frances would be nearer to her grandmother. Beauty had been hoping for this, and now she telegraphed Lanny that Irma was being gracious, and that it was his duty to send her a message at once. Lanny didn't need any prompting, but cabled his congratulations, best wishes for happiness, and gratitude for many kindnesses. He hoped that wasn't too effusive to one who was now an English countess ; the fact that she had referred to her new spouse as " Caddy " instead of " Lord Wickthorpe " was an indication that she desired things to continue on the old basis.

The newspapers and the gossip papers reported the wedding, for the heiress had made herself an international figure and when she bought herself a title she was crowning her career. They described the ceremony, quiet and unostentatious, presumably on account of the recentness of the divorce. It had been held at the bride's palatial home, with a Congregationalist minister of the neighbourhood officiating. The gossip papers mentioned that the Barnes family were Episcopalians, but of course under the laws of that church a Reno divorcee could not be remarried. One gossipier with a long memory went back to the beginning of the century and mentioned that an English earl who had resorted to Reno to get rid of one wife and acquire another had been convicted of a misdemeanour by his peers and sentenced to three months in jail. But, added the long-remembered one, nobody anticipated that either the fourteenth Earl of Wickthorpe or his American bride would be subjected to such humiliation.

The discarded husband rated brief mention as the grandson of Budd's and the son of Budd-Erling. He had been behaving himself discreetly, and his pinkness had apparently been forgotten. Nobody disliked him especially, so he was let off with a few lines, which suited him perfectly. He showed the items to his new partner, and remarked : " Irma used to give most of her discarded costumes to my mother, and she has given her discarded husband to you."

Said Trudi : " I'd never have got him otherwise ! "

VII

Six months had passed since General Francisco Franco had set out from the Canary Islands to overthrow the people's government of Spain; and he had not succeeded. It was a source of great annoyance to him, and he found it difficult to understand the forces which had brought his armies to a standstill and kept them there. Liberty, and the desire for it, were concepts foreign to the Generalissimo's mind; but he believed in the Devil, and it was his firm conviction that this Evil Being was at work in the modern world, inspiring men from two-score nations to join the International Brigade and keep his troops out of Madrid. The same wicked and rebellious Being had caused a Christ-killer to become Premier of France and permit the smuggling of arms across the border; also the satanic Bolsheviks to send ship-loads of tanks and planes, bombs and shells to Cartagena and Alicante. It was obvious that the Red forces couldn't keep going without these arms from abroad; so said the Generalissimo and his partisans—and omitted to mention that the same thing was true of his own forces. The Loyalists had some manufacturing power, but the Insurgents had practically none.

Franco was a Catholic, a devout believer of that old Spanish sort which for many centuries had maintained an Inquisition and had tortured tens of thousands of people for the good of their own souls. Franco's thinking was firmly rooted in the idea that this world was of little importance compared with the rest of eternity. The one purpose for which you were in this world was to save your soul, and you did that by accepting and holding firmly the One True Faith. From this it followed that dying wasn't a matter of special importance; provided that you died in the Faith, you made certain of a happier and infinitely longer existence. Nor was killing other people a serious matter, for if they were good Catholics you sent them to the same abode of bliss, where, presumably, they forgave you gladly. If they were enemies of the Faith, then to kill them was the noblest of actions, because every day they lived they would be undermining and destroying the faith of other souls, whereas when they were dead and sent to hell they could no longer do any harm.

Francisco Franco was a rather small commonplace-looking man with a round mild face and quiet manner. He had been somewhat looked down upon by his fellow-generals, but having got the backing of Juan March he was the master, and was showing no little competence in the job for which he had been trained. Strange as it might seem, he was not a bloodthirsty man and took no special

pleasure in killing; he killed firmly, steadily, and systematically, that being at once his profession and his religious duty. He killed to save not merely his own soul, but the souls of all the children of Spain who otherwise would be educated by atheists and thus consigned to everlasting flames. He killed to restore Holy Mother Church to her power in Spain, so that everybody might be compelled to come back into her bosom and the teaching of atheistic doctrines might cease for ever.

And just as to Franco the dread word Red included everybody who denied the right of monarchy, Army, and Church to rule the state and own the land and the banking enterprises, so the dread word atheist included everybody who presumed to question the authority of Holy Mother Church; not merely Communists, Anarcho-Syndicalists, and such vermin, but all those who called themselves Socialists, Liberals, Republicans, Democrats, Protestants, Masons. Franco shot them all, or else he packed them into jails where they died slowly of the many diseases of malnutrition. He shot everybody against whom any charges of this sort were made, and he didn't have to worry about mistakes, because the priests were always on hand to give extreme unction to those who asked for it, and then, if there was a mistake, the victim could explain it before a tribunal whose sources of information were less fallible than those of the Fifth Column.

VIII

It has been an ancient and honoured practice for Holy Mother Church to make use of the Devil in the service of God; the Jesuits have been cultivating that art for four hundred years. So it did not trouble General Franco that the funds which gave him his start had come from a tobacco smuggler whose sole interest in the war was to make money. The Generalissimo didn't mind promising monopolies which would enable the ex-smuggler to become richer than all the other rich men of Spain put together. Juan March was a Catholic, and performed faithfully the simple routine which was necessary to preserve his soul; when he was through making money, he might wish to secure a preferential place in heaven by willing his fortune to God. If he left it to his wife, the chances for God would be still better, for women accept much more readily the advice of their confessors. Sooner or later everything in Spain would come to God, and God's agent, the Church, would administer it.

Besides the Church there was really but one power needed in Spain, and that was the Army. According to its own laws, Holy

Mother Church never killed anybody ; what she did was to turn the doomed persons over to what she called the " secular arm." Naturally she wanted that " arm " to be obedient and also up-to-date. The Church herself is ancient, and her motto is *semper eadem*, for ever the same. But the Devil changes continually, and one of the things he does is to invent new methods of killing : Budd-Erling planes and Krupp tanks, armour-piercing bombs and rocket-shells. Therefore, in order to protect God's Church, the secular arm must have an abundance of the Devil's weapons. To help General Franco in getting them the Church was now pouring out her hoarded treasures, her priests were blessing the weapons and banners, and in every country of the world Catholic influence was being used to promote a holy crusade against the Reds.

Excepting only a handful of Catholics in New York and London and Paris who presumed to call themselves " liberal " and to suggest that the wealthy and proud Church of Spain was not the perfect representative of the humble and lowly Carpenter of Nazareth. To Franco and his partisans these Catholics were merely another sort of Reds, another device of the Devil to produce confusion among God's elect. The Devil was so diabolically clever that not even the Church, not even Heaven Itself was safe against his wiles. Who but the Devil could have contrived it that God, when He came to earth and took the form of a man, should have behaved and talked so much like a Red ? As a result of this calamity here were " liberal " Catholics and Pink-tinged Protestants objecting to the wholesale slaughter of men and women in the name of the Prince of Peace ; questioning a priestly hierarchy who dressed in jewelled robes in honour of One who had told His followers to take no heed, saying wherewithal should they be clothed ; inquiring why bishops should dwell in palaces for the glory of One who upon earth had had not where to lay His head !

And, if possible, even more confusing, the spectacle of pious white Christians employing barbarous dark Mohammedans to kill other Christians ! To Generalissimo Franco the answer was obvious : the " others " were not really Christians, but servants of the Devil well disguised. But the Moors failed to understand this distinction ; the poor benighted near-black heathen took all white men for Christians and delighted in killing them. The Moors had their own True Faith, and the fact that it was different was a joke on the Christians, who thought they were getting to heaven when in reality they were all tumbling into hell. The Moors enjoyed fighting, as the only proper occupation for a man, and they didn't mind getting killed, because they, too, had it fixed up in advance ; the more

Christians they sent to hell, the higher their rank in heaven and the more beautiful hours they would have with which to beguile eternity. Meanwhile they had the women in the towns and villages which they captured ; so it was a satisfactory arrangement all round, and if anybody found fault with it, obviously he must be a Red, and would be taken out to the cemetery and made to dig a deep trench for himself and his friends to be dumped into.

IX

On his trip to England with Trudi, Lanny had read letters from Alf to his mother and father. The volunteer pilot hadn't been able to say much about the war, on account of the censor, but he had written that he was having a grand adventure and learning a lot that would be useful to him and to England. "We are doing our job, and I hope the papers are letting you know at least a little about it. Madrid is still ours, and will remain so."

Rick's comment on this had been : "I took my chances, and he has to take his." Poor Nina had sat with her lips pressed tightly together, and afterwards had remarked to Trudi : "I suppose it is enough if I go on living and taking care of the others."

Now there came to Lanny a postcard signed "Romney," telling about developments in the art world of Spain. There was still a shortage of good colours, he reported, so he was doing rather crude pen-and-ink drawings. He had seen some fine paintings by Lawrence, of whom he was a great admirer. After showing this card to Trudi, Lanny mailed it to Rick, who in return sent clippings in which a correspondent of the London press in Albacete mentioned the grandson of Sir Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson as among the pilots flying in the service of the Loyalists. The press associations and larger newspapers had correspondents with both armies, and you could take your choice ; unfortunately several of those in Madrid were Fascist sympathizers and did as much harm to the government cause as they dared. This was made into a scandal by Loyalist friends in London and New York ; so the world civil war spread into the newspaper offices, as well as into pulpits of churches, houses of parliaments, and political mass meetings everywhere.

Lanny had one friend who always knew what wasn't in the capitalist press and why. That was Jesse Blackless, and now and then Lanny would drop in on him and collect items to be passed on to "Cato." Jesse and Lanny understood each other perfectly and

kept quiet about each other's doings—for Jesse might be as much embarrassed by a bourgeois nephew as Lanny by a Red uncle. Each poked fun at the other, and now and then scolded, but they respected each other and had never had a real quarrel.

Now Lanny got news of interest to him. Uncle Jesse had met at party headquarters a young French commercial pilot, a Communist, who had volunteered for Spain and had been flying there ever since the siege of Madrid had begun. This chap had been flying what he described as a "vintage" Bréget, an old model of French plane, the best the Spanish government had been able to get hold of. They had promised him an up-to-date fighter, and he might have been sore over the misrepresentation; but he was a comrade, and understood that in their desperation the government had to get fliers by hook or crook. Most of the men they had hired were interested only in the fifteen-hundred-dollar-a-month salary. Speaking French, that was nearly forty thousand francs, enough to make you dizzy.

This Frenchman had been at the Albacete airport with Alf and Laury, and had argued Red versus Pink tactics with them while the other pilots had been playing dice. He described the pair as fine fellows, who never shirked a job however dangerous. They were flying British sports planes which had been rigged to carry a bomb underneath. The planes had no armour and not even a machine-gun; the pilot carried an automatic pistol. But overhead flew the Russian fighter planes, which had proved themselves the best in the war, more than a match for Junkers and Heinkels, to say nothing of Italian Fiats. The amateur bomber would fly out and release his load, mostly by guesswork, and if there weren't too many of the attacking planes he had a good chance to get back. Just before Uncle Jesse's informant had left on furlough, several old transport planes, remodelled to carry bomb-loads, had showed up at the Albacete field, and the Englishmen were flying these. Lanny passed this information on to Rick, and sent a copy of the letter to his father, without any comment. For the first time in his life Lanny wanted to make his father suffer if he could!

X

Thus Lanny and his wife lived physically in Paris, and intellectually and emotionally in Germany and Spain. Trudi couldn't meet any refugees, or even subscribe to their papers; whatever couldn't be bought at some kiosk Lanny asked Rick to subscribe

for and re-direct, tightly wrapped, to Lanny at his hotel. They had a radio set in Trudi's studio, and turning it low they listened to the propaganda war. Lanny went into fashionable society only when his picture business required it. Trudi wouldn't go to theatres or other public places, so Lanny went rarely. He spent most of his time reading and thinking about the world he lived in, what was wrong with it and what hope there might be of changing it except for the worse.

And then, one day in February, a bundle of sorrow was left upon their door-step. It came in the form of a telegram from Rick; he had received a message from the commander of the Spanish Air Force at the Albacete headquarters, regretting to report that Alfy was "missing in action."

There was the thing they had been dreading; feeling sure that it would happen, yet never quite facing it, since many do come out alive and sound from every war. In some ways "missing" is even worse than "killed." It may mean so many things, and thus prepares a special kind of torment for loved ones. To each it presents a psychological problem, which each has to meet in his own way. Some believe in prayer; some live on hope; some make up their minds to the worst, so that anything less bad is good; some refuse to think about it at all and wage a battle of suppression in their minds.

Lanny had known this kind of torment many times since boyhood: first with Marcel, then with Rick, then with Marcel again; in Italy with Matteotti; in more recent unhappy years, Johannes Robin, then Freddi, then Trudi. Trudi herself had borne the anguish for four years. It was like being condemned to sit and stare at a blank wall and try to guess what lies on the other side; the wall is infinite in all directions and completely impenetrable; you simply sit and stare, and wait for it to fall down, or to develop a crack, or to dissolve and prove only a nightmare.

Lanny sent a telegram expressing his deepest sympathy, and wrote a letter saying every loving and helpful word he could think of, or that Trudi, schooled in grief, could suggest. Their cause was great; no greater had been in history. And whatever happened to Alfy, he had understood that; if he was still alive he understood it now, and it would steel his soul to bear suffering. This letter was meant for the whole family, not merely parents but grandparents and children. Lanny added his opinion that Franco wasn't shooting any Englishmen, and certainly not officers; he needed the support of the British government—and was getting it, as they all knew.

With snow on the roofs and chimney-pots of Paris, and a gale from the North Sea howling about the eaves of their studio, Lanny and Trudi sat in front of a little iron stove and he told her about the Pomeroy-Nielson family: how he had met Rick as a boy at Hellerau, learning delightful dances, and had visited Rick's home on the middle reaches of the Thames; how Rick had met Nina as a war nurse, he only nineteen and she younger still. Alfy had been born after his father's crash in France, and Lanny had first seen him in the latter days of the Peace Conference. From then on Lanny had watched him growing up, talked to him about his problems, and helped to shape his mind.

"Do you think he would have gone to Spain if he had had Marceline?" Trudi asked.

"Nobody can say. He was disappointed, but I don't think he was heart-broken; he was a serious lad, and politics had been a real thing to him since childhood; the family talks it all the time. I once quoted to him Napoleon's saying that politics is fate, and it made a deep impression on him."

Trudi thought, and said: "That is a deep saying."

"One could argue that various other things are fate, but in these modern times politics is such a tremendous force that one is tempted to concentrate upon it entirely. You and I are doing that."

XI

The first crack in the blank wall was a letter from Laurence Joyce to Rick, telling what he knew about his comrade's fate. In the "stable" which the Spanish government had been able to accumulate was an old Nieuport plane, and this had been equipped with a bomb-rack and sent out to interfere with Franco's communications and supplies. Spies had sent word concerning an ammunition dump which had been accumulated south of Toledo, and Alfy had been given precise directions and sent out with a load of bombs, accompanied by three Russian Chatos to protect him. He had started at dawn and, according to the accounts of the escort, had dropped his load directly on the target; at once the expedition had been attacked by half a dozen enemy planes, and in the resulting mêlée Alfy's plane had been seen descending, undoubtedly hit. More than that the Russians couldn't say, because when you are in a dogfight you have to watch your own plane and your enemies' to the exclusion of everything else.

That crack let you see a little way into the wall, but not through.

It only teased you with the idea that the crack might be widened. Rick had already gone into London and appealed to men he knew in Fleet Street who might be able to get information out of Franco Spain. Any newspaper man would admit that Alfy was news, for his grandfather was an English baronet and he was in the line of inheritance; his volunteering had been reported, and his fate was a matter of public interest. Reuter's had asked its men to find out what had happened to him, but apparently they were not able to do so. Likewise Sir Alfred's appeal to the British Foreign Office remained without results. Surely it hadn't been possible for a combat plane to crash in battle and nobody be able to find it! The episode represented a success for the Insurgents, so why should they be keeping it secret? If they had shot the young pilot, they could assert that he had tried to escape, the customary Spanish formula; or they could say that he had been killed in the crash, and nobody would be the wiser.

There were ten days of this cruel suspense, and then one evening Rick received a telephone call from one of the London papers; a dispatch had just come from a correspondent in Seville, mentioning that Rick's son was a prisoner in Cáceres; he had been injured and was recovering. Rick telegraphed this to Lanny, and next day, in a letter, he added that the family would set to work to inquire about the possibilities of an exchange of prisoners.

That was all for several days. Lanny knew that his friends were entering a zone of entanglements composed of stiff red tape, and were liable to be wandering there for a long time. He pictured Alfy, not the toughest of human specimens, lying helpless among hatefully-disposed enemies and able to speak little of their language. If he had had any money on his person it had no doubt been taken; his food would be the coarsest—worm-eaten lentils composing the main dish, and it would be the part of wisdom to swallow the worms. Lanny thought about Nina, weeping in her heart and eating very little, as was her custom when unhappy. His own food began to lose its savour, and he said to Trudi: "I think I ought to go and see them and help work out a solution."

One form of heroism that Trudi was resolved upon was never to object to any effort her new husband might wish to make for the cause. So now she said: "By all means." She didn't have to say: "What can you do?" for in the past two weeks they had canvassed the situation thoroughly, and Lanny had been able to think of various possibilities.

XII

He travelled to England by train and boat on a day of heavy storms. Nina and Rick met him in London, and he took them to a hotel room and told them: "I am thinking of going into Franco Spain, to see Alfy and find out if anything can be done."

They were not too greatly surprised, for they, also, had been canvassing the situation. Rick said: "Do you really think you could get in?"

"It can't hurt to try. I have a woman client who is well-known to the Fascist crowd, and I've been keeping up a correspondence with her, partly because I foresaw this situation. I can't see any reason why an American art expert shouldn't travel to Seville to look at paintings and perhaps bring some of them out."

"You think there's any chance they don't know about you, Lanny?"

"That's a question over which I rack my brains every time I meet a Fascist or a Nazi. How much does Göring know about me? How much does Hitler know? And Quadtratt? And Kurt? And Vittorio? And so on and on. Sometimes I decide it's inconceivable that the Gestapo doesn't know everything. Surely they must have learned that I have been giving money to the school at Cannes; and here in London it's no great secret that you and I are friends. I ask myself: 'Does Göring tolerate me because of my father? Or is it just because I amuse him? Or does he think he will get more out of me than I can get out of him? Or have I managed to convince him that I'm a tuft-hunter, proud of meeting important people?' I can't guess the answer to those questions. All I can do is to play my role as long as they let me and try to keep them from getting anything definite on me. There's a reasonably good chance that I got away with what I tried to do in Spain; I mean, both my trips were business trips, and I don't see how anyone could prove that I did anything else."

"They'd be terribly rough with you if anything should leak out, Lanny."

"I have more than one string I can pull. I have a Fascist brother-in-law, you know, and he might be of use in a pinch."

"You surely can't imagine that Marceline hasn't told him your real opinions!"

"No, but they're both very hard up for money. Also, I suspect that Marceline has a lot more feeling for Alfy than she has ever let me know. That might help a lot."

They discussed that situation. Lanny didn't assume that Vittorio would sell his cause for money, but he might be led to persuade himself that it wouldn't hurt Fascism to get Alfy released, on an agreement that the prisoner would never again aid the Spanish government. Lanny couldn't make a guess until he had talked with both Marceline and Vittorio. Rick put in the objection he had made in the case of Freddi Robin—that it would be an immoral action to pay a ransom to the Spanish rebels. Lanny replied, as he had done in Freddi's case, that it wouldn't be a ransom but a bribe; the money would go not to the Franco government but to one or more individuals.

Rick said: "You can count on the pater and me to do anything in our power. We can increase the mortgage on the place—I've paid off a part of it, you know."

"I have some cash at the moment," Lanny told him. "I'll carry a well-stuffed belt, for it won't be possible to consult you or anybody else. I have a perfectly good excuse for that, as I always carry money when I'm buying pictures. I'll have a portfolio full of evidence bearing on that."

They spent a day and most of the night talking out the details of this undertaking and devising a code by which the names of painters might cover various situations. In parting, Lanny told them gravely: "Don't key your hopes too high. I may not be able to get in at all, and even if I do, I may find myself helpless. All I can do is to keep my eyes open and take any chance that seems to hold out a promise."

BOOK EIGHT

THE WORLD TURNED PALE

29

Ignorant Armies

I

IT WAS the height of a prosperous season on the Coast of Pleasure. Not many showed signs of being troubled by the thought of armies lying out in snow and freezing cold in trenches on the Guadarrama Mountains, or of women and children being killed every night by bombs and shells in Madrid. The ladies and gentlemen of pleasure appeared to have learned the same lesson as Lanny Budd, that suffering is an old custom in Europe and that you have to concentrate on your own job—whether it be planning a reconstructed world or giving a more elegant dinner-party than your social rivals.

Beauty Budd was playing her part in this latter competition, and the bride of the Capitano was assisting. They both had lovely new costumes, and Lanny could be sure they were running into debt. But it wasn't his role to be a kill-joy at present ; on the contrary, he would submit to having his best togs unpacked and put in order, and would grace any mother's dinner-party, entertaining the company with the delightful adventures of the Comendador Humfredo Fernando Bustamente y Bastida. Lanny had received a letter from Adella Murchison, telling how they had conducted a guessing-game over the old gentleman's bullet-wounds and had raised several hundred dollars for the local Red Cross. It had proved so popular that it was to be done again on a bigger scale ; and this provided an amusing dénouement for Lanny's tale.

The family, of course, wanted to know about Alf, and Lanny told what he knew ; the poor fellow had committed a grave indiscretion, and the penalty would be heavy. Lanny himself took an Olympian attitude : too bad, but it couldn't be helped. While he said this he watched his half-sister with veiled attention. Would she disagree ? She didn't. Would she ask about it afterwards ? Again

she didn't. Surely she must be troubled to know that her girlhood sweetheart was imprisoned under such terrible circumstances ; but she couldn't help it, and must not let it interfere with dancing. Perhaps she didn't know how bad the circumstances were ; perhaps she accepted the easy assumption of the comfortable classes, that Franco was a gentleman, a *preux chevalier*, and would treat a gentleman knight-of-the-air according to the code of Don Quixote. Or perhaps she just didn't think about the matter at all. Lanny wasn't sure, and it wasn't the time to ask.

II

What Lanny wished to do was to renew his acquaintance with the Señora Villareal. He had got very good prices for a couple of her paintings, so now she was living in the style to which she had been accustomed. She had married her elder daughter to a Frenchman, and, knowing France, Lanny could guess what *dot* she had provided, and that she would pretty soon be needing funds again. He had tea with her, and of course she wanted to talk about her native land and the dreadful things happening there. Lanny told the details of what he had done for Señor Sandoval, whom she knew by reputation ; he described the sights he had seen in Madrid. It did no good to under-estimate one's enemies, he told her, and he feared the Iberian Peninsula was in for a long and devastating war.

Distressing news indeed for a refugee who had been reading the Rightist press, and had been told by her friends how the *canaille* was going to be scattered by a whiff of grapeshot, modern style. Lanny was telling no secrets when he mentioned that arms were being smuggled into Red Spain. He took the liberty of exaggerating somewhat. Not merely fanatics, but also gangsters were buying up arms and ammunition to supply the demands of the Spanish government. Seven hundred million dollars in gold was a force not easy to withstand. It was, Lanny explained in detail, the same sort of thing as had been witnessed in the United States during the Prohibition era. Smugglers and dealers in contraband who had been making money out of the Chinese arms trade and the Chaco arms trade had now turned to Spain. They bought stuff in Belgium and even in Germany, brought it into France, and hid it under loads of food and other products going to Spain ; or they hid it in the launches or sailing-vessels of Basque fishermen, Greek smugglers, Turks, Algerians, every sort who knew the coves and inlets of the Spanish Mediterranean and the Biscayan shore.

And then the Russians, whose ships came from Odessa, loaded with munitions. Lanny described their planes and how skilfully they fought. They had sent not only pursuits but bombers, and before long nothing behind the Nationalist lines would be safe. Lanny mentioned this casually and left a woman refugee's imagination to do the rest. "I am afraid this is a depressing conversation," he remarked, giving her a chance to change it; but she said: "*Pas du tout*. It is much better that I should face the facts. I suppose it would be the part of wisdom to bring the rest of my paintings out of Spain."

"If you know any way to do it, Señora. I doubt if the ordinary means of transportation are available now. You must understand that Seville has become the base of an army of one or two hundred thousand men, and railroad and lorry transportation must be taxed to the limit. Probably everything has been commandeered, as it was on the government side."

"Would you be interested to get my paintings and market them, Monsieur Budd?" inquired the Señora.

"I have hesitated to suggest that," he replied, "because I felt that you didn't know me well enough. But if you have sufficient confidence in me, I would be willing to travel to Seville, get your paintings, and if possible take them to New York and show them to my clients. I feel sure enough of my ability to market them to be willing to do it at my own expense, charging you only the customary ten per cent. upon whatever I am able to get. You would have to set a minimum price on each work, and if I was not able to obtain that price I would bring the work back to you."

The Señora hastened to declare that she had sufficient confidence in Monsieur Budd and would be glad to have such help. They took up each painting in turn; Lanny said what he would hope to get, and the Señora stated her minimum. After they had come to agreement, he said: "I will draw up a contract embodying our understanding and post it to you; I suggest that you take two or three days to study it, and have your lawyer or somebody go over it for you. I should feel more comfortable if that was done, so that you could never feel that I had rushed you into something."

She assured him that she wouldn't feel that way; but of course as a lone widow she appreciated his efforts to reassure her. He pointed out that his ability to execute the agreement would of necessity depend upon his being able to get into Nationalist Spain and to bring out the paintings; he would have to specify that in the contract, and would look to her to give him aid. To this she assented, and offered him letters to various persons in Seville whose

influence might be helpful. This of course was what he had come to get.

III

Lanny's next move was to take his mother into the plot. Beauty would never be a political person ; her motives were personal, and when she knew anybody, she would be against keeping him in jail. She knew the Pomeroy-Nielson family intimately and was moved by their sufferings, individual and collective. She was wretched over the thought of Lanny going into danger again, but when she saw that his mind was made up, she agreed to help him and to keep his secret.

What he wanted, first of all, was to understand the foreign branch of their family, the San Girolamos. Lanny put it that way because it seemed to him that Marceline had become a new being since her marriage, and he wasn't sure how to approach her.

"I find it so with many of the young people," Beauty said. "They are so selfish and so hard ; they have no hearts and are proud of it."

"Hearts are luxuries," Lanny told her : "like the frills on your dresses and the lace on your handkerchiefs. You could afford them, because you were born in a secure society where ideals and standards were fixed and you knew exactly what was right. But now the world is changing, and the young people don't understand it ; they know that the old standards are false but they haven't found any new ones."

"So far as I am able to find out, their standards are whatever gives them pleasure. Marceline is happy when she's dancing and when people are watching her ; she doesn't seem to care who is dancing with her, provided he dances well. One of the troubles with Vittorio is that he can't dance—oh, won't try to, with only one arm."

"They aren't happy, then ?"

"Who is, entirely ? Marceline pretends to be, and sticks it out, because she has had her own way and would die before she would admit it was a mistake."

"It's important that I should understand them both ; so tell me—what is wrong between them ?"

"First of all, lack of money. Vittorio is chafing dreadfully. He expected an important appointment ; he says he has a right to it but he doesn't get it. He writes letters to Rome, and promises come, but nothing more. Now he wants to go and find out about it ; he wants me to give him the money, and of course Marceline has to

go along ; she thinks she can help him, and perhaps she's afraid to be separated from him. But it would cost a lot."

"You have been giving them money?"

"A little. I gave him a couple of thousand francs the other day, and he lost it playing *trente et quarante*."

"Oh, my God!"

"It was a social game, and he couldn't very well have kept out." Beauty had to defend her daughter's husband. "I don't think he gambles in the casinos—at least if he does Marceline hasn't told me. You know how it is when a man needs money: he is sure his luck will change and he will win a lot."

Lanny hadn't lived all his life on the Riviera without knowing all about that trap for the human mind and spirit. "So you're going to pay his gambling debts!"

"I gave him a good scolding and he swore he wouldn't play again. But it's hard, when you know how everybody expects you to. One can lose a lot of money even at bridge."

Lanny knew that. He knew the many forces which were undermining smart society. A few enjoyed money and ease, and they set the standards very high; a swarm of lesser folk tried to imitate them, in dress, entertainment, a thousand forms of extravagance; the result was a mob of people ravenous for money and ready to commit any sort of indecency to get it. But Lanny wasn't here to preach sermons just now, so he said: "Tell me about Vittorio's character."

"I think somewhere in him there's a decent boy, but it's hard to get at. I'm afraid you are right, he has been taught a very ugly creed."

"It derives from a perverted philosopher, Sorel, who established a cult of violence and anti-humanity. These young Fascists mean to take the world, and nobody can stop them, nobody can shame them. They are utter and complete materialists."

"Vittorio denies that. He insists they are true idealists, because they face the fact that life is a struggle, and they stand together and win because they deserve to."

"Every gang does that; at least every one that succeeds. The question I have to determine is whether Vittorio is a loyal gangster or whether he is more interested in his personal success. You can see how it is—he could be useful to me in Franco Spain, and I would pay him well for his help; but if he's a genuine fanatic, he would spurn my bribe and might even think it was his duty to betray me. I can't hint at the subject until I've made sure about him."

"Let me handle it," said Beauty. "It will be natural for me to talk about Alfy with Marceline, and I'll find out what her attitude is, and maybe she'll tell me more about Vittorio."

IV

So began a strange four-cornered family intrigue. Lanny and his mother trusted each other reasonably well, but they trusted Marceline less and Vittorio not at all. As they went on they discovered that Marceline and Vittorio set sharp limitations upon their trust of each other. Marceline considered herself abused because neither her brother nor her mother would give her as much money as she needed and because they tried to put strings upon what they did give. Vittorio urged her to get more, and blamed her for keeping too large a share. They had tiffs and then made up, because they were passionately in love with each other, and that was the one pleasure that was free of charge.

The fifth member of the household, Mr. Dingle, flitted like a wraith about this scene. Physically a round-faced, rosy, and white-haired old gentleman didn't resemble a wraith; but there was something uncanny about his practice of letting everybody alone and seeming not even to know what was going on about him. Lanny had long ago come to realize that he was observant and understood the strange quirks of human nature; but he never interfered, and if he made a comment it was in some indirect way, so that unless you knew him well you couldn't be sure whether he intended it.

Fate had presented Parsifal Dingle with a Fascist stepson-in-law, a new phenomenon, and perhaps the toughest nut that New Thought had ever set out to crack. The Capitano repudiated on principle all those spiritual ideas which Parsifal made the centre of his being; the clash of two opposing philosophies afforded a psychological spectacle which Lanny would have liked to stay and watch. The young aristocrat, trained as a killer and a cynic, was the product of an aged culture with its corruptions freshly renewed; the old man, born in a prairie village of parents who had lived in a sod hut, was self-educated, and sometimes committed errors in his native language, to say nothing of his French. Vittorio looked upon him as a freak and perhaps a crank, whose only usefulness lay in the fact that he had influence with Beauty, the keeper of the purse.

Parsifal, on the other hand, looked upon Vittorio as a child of God, not to be criticized but simply to be loved. Vittorio didn't in the least want to be loved by Parsifal, and indeed would consider it a presumption; but Parsifal would go on loving him, and some day, in God's good time, a change would begin to dawn in Vittorio's soul. He would realize that love is divine, and that it is infinite, the one thing in the universe which is really important.

so much more important than killing people or even building an empire !

Marceline had told Vittorio about Alfy, because it was a distinguished thing to have been engaged to the grandson of an English baronet. She had represented that Alfy had gone to the war because of a broken heart ; and who could say that he hadn't ? Now it was romantic and picturesque for her to be worried about his fate—and she really was, so Beauty insisted, in telling her son. Marceline kept Vittorio jealous all the time—she couldn't very well help it, he being of that nature, and moreover unable to dance, and Marceline accustomed to having so many dancing-partners. They quarrelled about the ardour of her dancing, but then she made it up by the ardour of her love.

There was the question of Lanny's pinkness, of first importance if he was going among the Fascists. Marceline had told her mother that Lanny was in part to blame for Alfy's trouble, having encouraged him in his eccentric notions ; but Marceline hadn't said that to her husband, because she regarded it as a skeleton in the family cupboard. Now she understood that Lanny had gradually changed his tone ; she granted him the right to do so, and was glad of it. She attributed it in part to the excesses of the Reds which had shocked everybody in her world, and in part to business reasons. That wasn't very noble of him, but Marceline didn't expect him to be noble ; all she objected to was the idea he seemed to have that he was better than everybody else. " She can't understand why it isn't your duty to help her and her crippled husband," explained Beauty.

" I'm willing to help them both for a while," was the reply ; " they can help me at the same time."

V

The Señora signed the contract and provided Lanny with letters which would give him access to the top flight of Seville society. She warned him that this society was formal and reserved, not free and easy as on the Côte d'Azur ; Lanny said he understood and would be circumspect. He noticed that the Señora's younger daughter was present at this session, and that the mother guided the conversation to enable the young lady to display her somewhat limited acquirements. Lanny was used to seeing mothers do this, and he smiled to himself, thinking : " She is prepared to overlook a Reno divorce ! "

He went back to his own mother and to a different sort of

intrigue. At the family dinner-table he mentioned the contract he had just signed, and he saw immediate evidence of interest in both Marceline and Vittorio. "Oh, Lanny, what interesting adventures you do have!" exclaimed the girl. He answered: "I manage to get about and to have my expenses paid." He must be careful not to say anything noble!

"You ought to make a handsome sum out of that deal," said Vittorio significantly.

"There is no greater gamble," he replied. "I try to guess what American art collectors will appreciate, and sometimes I hit it and sometimes I miss."

"In our country," declared the Capitano, "we do not permit our art to be carried away."

Evidently he didn't know about the Spanish law; and Lanny didn't supply the information. "There is something to be said on the other side," he commented. "When an old master goes to America it not only helps to spread the love of art in a more primitive country, but it is a good advertisement for *la patria*."

"America will hear about us without that," replied the young Italian proudly. "Abyssinia is only a beginning." It was a cue for one of his discourses.

Lanny listened politely, and left it for a frivolous young bride to become bored and bring it to a stop. Later the art expert remarked: "You must have many army comrades and friends in Seville."

"Undoubtedly; but it's difficult to know. Their presence is not officially admitted."

"Find out, if you can," said Lanny. "If you give me letters to them I'll be glad to present your compliments."

VI

That was all at the meal; but later, when Marceline was alone with her mother she remarked: "You see how it is; Lanny is always making money, yet he tried to pretend he hasn't any to spare."

"An idea has occurred to me," countered the tactful mother. "Would you and Vittorio like to take that trip to Seville with him?"

"You didn't hear him invite us, did you?"

"No, but I might suggest it. Alfie is somewhere there in prison, and it's not very kind of us not to do something about it if we can."

"What could we do?"

"Vittorio might be able to do quite a lot, with his Army

connections and all his friends. He might see Alf, and perhaps arrange for him to have special food. It would seem like a nice thing for you to do, considering your lifelong friendship for the poor boy. It might even be that the Pomeroy-Nielsons would offer to pay the cost of having somebody go in and do such a service."

"It surely wouldn't do any good to Vittorio to be known as a friend of a Red prisoner."

"Possibly not; but Vittorio hasn't been getting much help from his government of late, and he might like to do something for himself. It's possible he might arrange to smuggle Alf out of Spain."

"But that's a crazy idea!" exclaimed Marceline. The Budds had always been a plain-spoken household.

"Maybe so; I don't know the circumstances, and I can't judge. I know that prisoners often do escape, and there are men in every army who are willing to wink at something for the sake of a good chunk of cash."

"I am certain that Vittorio wouldn't do anything against his government. That would be treason, or something."

"Suppose that Alf would give his word of honour not to do any more fighting against Franco, but shut his mouth and go back to Oxford and study whatever he was studying before he took up his crazy notion—what harm would that do to the Italian government or the Italian cause?"

"That might be so—but how in the world could Vittorio manage such a thing?"

"All I'm suggesting is that you and Vittorio might go and try to find a way. I feel pretty sure that Sir Alfred would be willing to pay a great deal of money to anyone who could arrange it; and Vittorio, who is so sick of sitting about idle, might find it something of an adventure."

"Is that what Lanny is going into Spain for?" inquired Marceline sharply.

Beauty had been expecting the question, and knew that she would have to lie boldly. It was by no means the first time in her life. "I haven't brought up the subject with Lanny," she said. Like all skilful liars, she preferred to do as little of it as possible, and the fact was that Lanny had brought up the subject with her. "There'd be no use talking about it unless Vittorio was interested, for Lanny would be helpless in such a matter. An Italian officer in uniform could go anywhere and do anything. It might even turn out that the jailers who are guarding Alf are Italians. You'd just have to go in there and see. Needless to say, we'd all have to keep faith, and never breathe a word about it to anybody else."

VII

As it turned out, Vittorio was by no means indifferent to his mother-in-law's suggestion. He and Marceline came to her to talk it over, and the shrewd woman of the world listened and watched the young pair, trying to decide what was in their hearts. Marceline's case was simple: to her it meant a free trip with expenses paid. Beauty's daughter couldn't have been Beauty's daughter without being ready to travel to any part of the world where there were de luxe hotels and smart society. The mother's whole life had been such a free trip, and she had made it her business to make herself useful to the sort of persons who would take her along. She had tried to teach the same art to her daughter, but the trouble was Marceline wanted the trip but didn't want to pay the price.

As for Vittorio, he, too, had had a mother and had had the worldly arts explained to him; but in addition Mussolini had taught him to be a fanatic, a new and dangerous element in any young person's character. Just how much of a fanatic was he? Enough to stay poor the rest of his life and to be slighted by the officials who had sent him out to risk his life and lose an arm in Africa? Beauty dropped shrewd little hints along this line and saw the young officer rise to them like a trout to a fly. "He wants money more than he wants anything else," she reported to her son.

Lanny wasn't supposed to know about these negotiations, but Vittorio now asked that he be called into the discussion. Lanny of course professed to be startled by the proposal, and afraid such an undertaking might jeopardize his position as art expert. But when it was pointed out that Vittorio might be willing to undertake the project on his own responsibility. Lanny could not refuse to write a letter to Sir Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson. In this letter he informed the baronet that a person of responsibility was willing to try to get Alfy out of Spain and desired to know whether Sir Alfred would advance the travelling-expenses of two persons for a month, what sums he would authorize to be paid out to others, and what reward in the event they were able to deliver Alfy alive in any neutral port.

That is what Lanny was supposed to write, but of course he actually wrote something different. He had already discussed the idea of Vittorio with Rick, and they had agreed upon a code name, Veronese. Now Lanny wrote that he had what seemed an excellent chance to get a genuine Veronese painting, and requested that Sir Alfred would write by return post to Lanny as follows: "I have your letter outlining your friend's plan and will be pleased to pay

the reasonable expenses of two persons for not more than a month. I will furnish additional sums not exceeding two thousand pounds which you may authorize them to pay out to others, and as soon as I see the final results of their effort, I will pay them two thousand pounds reward. I am depositing one thousand pounds to your account at your London bank."

That was hardly the sort of letter a man of judgment would write; but Lanny said in his letter to Rick: "Tell the pater not to worry, for I hereby assume responsibility for all consequences of this letter and will reimburse him for any losses in which it might involve him. He doesn't have to pay any money; the letter he is to write is just a blind, as you can explain to him." But the baronet wasn't satisfied to have it that way; he had his own ideas of what became an English gentleman, and he actually put the thousand pounds into Lanny's bank—something which Lanny knew represented a heavy sacrifice for that family.

Two thousand pounds at this time was equal to nearly ten thousand dollars, or more than two hundred thousand francs; a neat fortune for a young married couple. Lanny, whose unusual notions included some called "feminism," insisted that if Marceline went along she would be doing her share of the work and should have half the reward. Vittorio chose to take this as an insult to an Italian officer and gentleman; but Marceline was delighted, and forgave all her brother's sins forthwith. Lanny stood firm, and even threatened to demand a share for his mother, whose bright mind had hit upon the scheme. For his own part he would claim nothing, for he wished to take no part in the risky affair, except for acting as a go-between with Sir Alfred. Vittorio and his wife must undertake the venture on their sole responsibility, and would affirm Lanny's innocence if any trouble should arise.

Beauty showed signs of being anxious over Lanny's insistence upon this point; but he said: "Let them earn what they get, if they can. And as for their getting caught, what good would it do for me to get caught with them? Much better to be free and try to help them!"

VIII

The four conspirators settled down to work out their problem. At this time the land connection between France and Insurgent Spain was undependable, and the quickest route was from Marseilles to Cádiz. It was patrolled by many warships and there had been "incidents" of various sorts; the situation was confused, but

Lanny said they would be reasonably safe on a French, British, or American vessel, for neither side in the Spanish conflict desired trouble with the major powers.

In the past four years Lanny had given no little thought to the problem of smuggling people out of prisons and prison-lands. He didn't mention it now, but out of the ideas he had accumulated he remarked: "If you told the young pair to get Alfy out of jail, you'll have the job of getting him to the coast and on board a ship. In a country at war you'll have to have military passes, and your car is apt to be pretty carefully examined. It seems to me that one of us will have to stay in hiding for a while and let Alfy use that person's papers. Alfy is tall and thin and wouldn't do as a woman, so he'd have to take either Vittorio's place or mine. Being taller than either of us, he couldn't wear our clothes, so I suggest that we have a couple of suits made for him. I know his size pretty well, and there'll be nothing suspicious about our having extra suits; nobody will unpack them and measure them to see if they fit us."

So Lanny went to his tailor and said he wanted to make a present to a friend, and ordered a lightweight suit for a man two inches taller than himself and an inch smaller round the chest. Vittorio went to a different tailor and said he had an officer friend arriving by steamer, and as he would have to attend a formal function, Vittorio wished to provide him with a dress uniform similar to that which Vittorio was wearing. These orders were filled and the accessories purchased; so that in case of need, a war prisoner could doff whatever he might be wearing and emerge as either an American art expert or an Italian Air Force officer.

Meanwhile the matter of passports had to be arranged. The Insurgent government of Spain had not been recognized by France, but it had its agents who were performing diplomatic and consular functions. There was such an official in Nice, and before him appeared an American gentleman of elegant appearance who exhibited a contract with a wealthy lady of Seville and letters of introduction to some of the most important personalities of that city; also an Italian officer with proper credentials and an empty sleeve gained in the Abyssinian war; and a fashionable young lady of the Côte d'Azur, the bride of this officer. The "consul" knew that there were several thousand Italian officers now in Spain, helping in the liberation of his country, and that a wounded one on furlough should wish to see what his comrades were doing seemed a quite natural thing.

Lanny bought a considerable quantity of American and English money and sewed it in the underside of a belt which he would not

take off even while he slept. He had learned that trick from his father in boyhood, when the munitions salesman had carried his secret cable code in that way. Franco Spain was using the paper money of Madrid, but required that it be specially stamped, and Lanny would buy that money in Cádiz and Seville. In one of his suitcases he put a copy of his card-file and a brief-case full of correspondence with rich and important clients. Franco Spain needed foreign credits, and the government officials might see no reason to enforce the republic's law against the exporting of art works.

IX

Beauty's chauffeur deposited them in Marseilles, where they began visiting shipping-offices and wandering up and down the docks. Anything could be shipped to Cádiz except munitions, and many neutral shipowners were glad to get the money of Juan March and the Duque de Alba; for six hundred francs apiece, about twenty-four dollars, the voyageurs obtained two clean and comfortable cabins on an English passenger-freighter which was due to sail the next day; meanwhile they put up at the Hotel de Noailles, and entertained themselves with one of those "screwball comedies" which were the rage among Hollywood fans all the way from Singapore to Buenos Aires. The heroine was the daughter of a railway tycoon who lived in a house which might have been mistaken for his biggest railway station, and she ran away from home and got into a mix-up which caused her to be mistaken for a gangster's moll. She had to be rescued by a newspaper reporter who looked not a little like Lanny Budd, and Vittorio said such a story was proof of the decadence of pluto-democratic society. However, that didn't keep him from staying to see the reporter round up half a dozen gangsters single-handed.

Mare Nostrum is far from dependable in February, but it put on its best show for the travellers, who sat on deck and watched the parade of the sea go by, everything from fishing-boats with red lateen sails to cruisers with grey war-paint. A tense and crucial period in the history of this old sea which so many had claimed and some were claiming still. Britain had just concluded a treaty with Italy, trying to win her away from Germany; they agreed to protect the freedom of this highway so vital to them both; so a British captain and an Italian officer could talk as allies and discuss the dangers which might threaten both. The Britisher was hostile to sailors of the Spanish fleet who had dumped their officers overboard; the

survivors, he opined, were not very adept at managing the vessels and had not been able to do much for their cause. The "Nationalists"—so Lanny had to get used to calling them—were out hunting with the vessels they had kept, and British destroyers and cruisers out of Gibraltar were protecting their own. But still, you could never be sure, and a torpedo, especially in the night, was a possibility not to be excluded.

The only challenge was by a Franco gunboat as they were approaching Cádiz. They were authorized to proceed, and crept into a harbour which was handling several times its normal shipping with several times the normal delays. The passengers had to spend another night on board, and when at last they were able to present their papers to a port officer and be taken ashore, they had to spend several hours waiting for a train to Seville, and not being certain whether they could get on board it.

Meanwhile they could stroll and take in the sights, to which Vittorio's uniform gave them free admission. They watched an Italian transport unloading a thousand or more *Militi* in Blackshirt uniforms, and several Italian vessels being emptied of tanks, guns, and boxes of ammunition by the cradleful. It was amusing, after having read for the past half-year the solemn protestations of the Italian government before the Non-Intervention Committee in London. Vittorio was free with his comments on this theme, which he took as evidence of the superiority of Italian brains to those of the decadent democracies. Apparently his Italian brain overlooked how this point of view might affect a citizen of the democracies, causing him to hesitate in entrusting a Fascist with money, information, or anything else.

They reached Seville late at night, and put up at the Hotel Bristol, having learned that the Alfonso XIII, also the Andalucía, had been reserved for Italian officers. Really, you could hardly be sure whether you were in Seville or Naples, there were so many black shirts on the streets and so much Italian talk. Officers and privates all walked proudly, swelling out their chests, for they had just taken Málaga almost unassisted, and were confident of going straight on to Valencia, wiping out the Red government and cutting off Madrid from the sea.

Next morning Lanny set out to find out what could be done about hiring a car, and Vittorio went in high spirits to look up some of his friends. He promised to bring one or more back to lunch if it

could be done. And it could. He turned up with no less than three guests : a comrade of his days in the flying-school, a comrade of this comrade, and a distant cousin, lieutenant in the quartermaster's department. All three clicked their heels, doubled in the middle like jack-knives, and kissed the hand of the Capitano's bride. All three proved to have excellent appetites, and enjoyed the meal provided by an expensive restaurant. In Continental fashion, all three stared at Marceline, in fact, they found it hard to do anything else ; they were, in the French formula, *foudroyés*, in the Italian, *fulminati*, that is, thunderstruck. They talked about the war, so *eccitante, gloriosa*, but their eyes would come back to the young bride, and their sentences, in English, French, or Italian, would stumble.

It was going to be that way, Lanny soon perceived—and so did Marceline. She had come to a dancing lady's paradise. Here were swarms of *elegantissimi*, torn suddenly from their homes and shipped off to a strange and unexpected land. Most of them had been told they were going to Abyssinia to become consuls in the ancient Roman sense ; but here, instead, they found themselves on the way to an actively erupting war. Few of them had opportunity to meet the upper-class ladies of Spain, who dwell in great two-storey homes having marble-paved patios cooled by fountains. In Marceline they were confronted with elegance and grace, fashionable manners and smart conversation ; the French *chic*, the American free-and-easy, do-as-you-please, and take-what-you-can-get spirit ! The Fascist code required motherhood and the domestic virtues of their own women, but imposed no such restrictions so far as concerned the women of other nations—or even of other men.

Would Marceline dance ? Indeed she would ! Here was a space cleared and an orchestra, so that young men going out to suffer privation, wounds, and perhaps death might have one last fling of pleasure, a hint of love, an intimation and imitation of romance. Vittorio would have to sit and watch covertly and try not to glower too ridiculously. He had married a dancing lady and couldn't very well expect to lock her up in a Bluebeard's castle. He couldn't deny to his comrades what all the world considered their social right. Each would have a turn and then another, and would come back flushed with pleasure, telling Vittorio as well as his wife that there had never been a dancer like her.

It was going to be that way always. Nobody, and no power on earth, was going to keep Marceline from being delighted with men's delight in her dancing. She was a creature of that sublimated and sophisticated kind of sexuality which is called feminine charm ; she would play with love and then run away from it, laughing ; not

maliciously, because that wasn't her nature, but gaily, because she had played all her life. She was bored by seriousness, and treated it as the torero treats the very serious bull in the early stages of their encounter, waving his cloak in the creature's face and stepping lightly out of the way of his charges.

So life in Seville was going to be for Vittorio what life is everywhere, a mingling of pleasure and pain. A pleasure to stay at a fashionable hotel and be free to invite a swarm of friends and play the gracious host at the expense of Sir Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson ; on the other hand a torment to watch his darling gyrating in the arms of some other man, to see her face all smiles and her eyes closed with rapture. Vittorio would think all the thoughts which the jealous Moor had thought ; and, it must be admitted, with not quite so little reason. Lanny would watch, also, and think his own thoughts ; he was not in a position to object to either the flirtations or the extravagances. Marceline would exclaim : "*Mon dieu !*" and Vittorio would exclaim : "*Diacine !*" and both would demand to know : "How are we ever to find a way to help Alfy unless we make friends ?"

XI

Lanny had watched the beginning of Fascist education more than fifteen years ago, and here was the end-product for him to study with a sociological eye. These young officers treated him with respect and gave him no personal offence, but their attitude towards all the non-Fascist world was one of disciplined and systematic scorn. They knew very little about that world, and believed what they had been taught ; whenever they spoke about international affairs, it seemed to Lanny that he was listening to the voice of Mussolini giving an interview to Rick during the Cannes Conference of sorrowful memory. Mussolini was no ignoramus, but a thoroughly trained Socialist party member and editor. He knew all the weaknesses of the bourgeois lands, and had carefully selected the worst of them and taught them to his followers. Here now were the élite of these followers, repeating his words like so many black-shirted poll-parrots.

They were riding their wave of glory ; they were the new empire-builders, making new history. Doubtless there were some who resented having been tricked into a journey to Spain, but they kept silence, and it would have taken a long time for Lanny to win their confidence. The accepted explanation among them was that they were fooling the democracies, and that was a delightful joke

upon which they never wearied of playing variations. When one of them referred to himself as a *volontario*, he winked and all the others grinned.

Their attitude to the Spanish, whom they had come to save, was curious. They would have been willing to take all the Latin peoples in as equals in the glorious destiny of Fascismo, but the others would not have it so. The French were decadent, indeed rotten—look at them, with a *Giudeo* for the head of their state, a pacifist, a sentimentalist who called himself a democrat and submitted to the “blackmail of the street”—they had learned that phrase of the French Rightists. As for the Spanish, they were too proud of themselves to be capable of discipline, and in this crisis were doing almost nothing to save their country. First they had depended upon Moors and the Foreign Legion, and when these were stalled in front of Madrid they had come crying to Il Duce for help. And did they think they were going to get it for nothing? The Italians had taken possession of the Balearic Islands—and were they expected to hand them back when the Reds had been put down? When the Italians took Gibraltar from Britain, would they be expected to hand that over to Franco, who could hardly have got Cádiz without Italian air support?

XII

Lanny presented his letters of introduction in Seville, and thus had an opportunity to inspect the other side of this picture. The Spanish aristocracy had, of course, been terrified by the people's government, and had been helpless to put it down for themselves; but they didn't admit that fact, and safe here, a long way from the battle-line, they were not altogether grateful to the foreign hordes which had burst in upon their city. The remarks of the Spanish ladies about the motives of the intruders were such that Lanny forebore to mention having brought a Fascist brother-in-law along with him.

What troubled these proud ladies was that the war had taken their men-servants, and made their women-servants too greatly aware of strange males on the streets. Also, the cost of food had more than doubled, and the end appeared to be not yet. Manners and morals were declining, and it was a hard time indeed: so said an elderly noble lady who had known Zaharoff's duquesa and was pleased to talk about her with the grandson of Budd Gunmakers. When she learned that he was interested in paintings she showed him some of her own, obviously hoping that he would offer to buy

them—but he didn't, for while they were most aristocratic they were not very artistic.

Also Lanny met General Aguilar, back from the Jarama front for a rest; he had silver hair and moustaches, silver medals across his chest, also bronze, and two or three military crosses. A very distinguished person, distressed at the moment because the *chusma*, the rabble, were putting up such an unexpected resistance, and it was an unheard-of thing, contrary to all precedent. Now the Italian *Militi* had come to that front, just south of Madrid—and really, it seemed that the General was afraid they might win where his own troops of the regular Spanish Army had failed. What would that leave of prestige to a man who had devoted his whole life to learning to fight and had failed every time he had tried it? The General didn't say that, of course, but when Lanny mentioned his name to the young Blackshirts, they hailed it with loud contempt.

All his life Lanny had been used to meeting exalted personages, and he knew pretty well how to deal with them. He listened to their polite conversation and did not expect it to be entertaining. He might need their help in taking the pictures out of Spain, and also in the matter of Alfie, so he made himself agreeable, and was invited to drink a great many *copitas de manzanilla*. He carefully led the conversation to the airmen on both sides and what was happening to them; to war prisoners and how they were being treated; to the English aristocracy and their attitude to the cause of Spanish liberation. But try as he would, he couldn't get anyone to mention a baronet's son in prison, and not a single person whom he met indicated dissatisfaction with Franco or his cause.

XIII

Lanny found that one of General Aguilar's sons possessed a car that had not been commandeered, and Lanny arranged to hire it for several weeks. He drove his relatives through the soft spring-time of the Guadalquivir valley to the estate of Señora Villareal, where he was cordially welcomed by the steward; he presented his letter and announced his purpose to take the paintings, provided that he was able to make arrangements for exporting them. He had explained to Vittorio and Marceline that this was a place where either he or they might hide while the other was taking Alfie to the coast; so they both made themselves agreeable to Señor Lopez and established themselves as friends of the Nationalists. The steward talked freely about the war as it appeared from Andalusia;

but, alas, he didn't say anything about airmen-prisoners, nor did anyone to whom he introduced his visitors indicate any impulse to turn traitor.

They came back to Seville, a delightful old city ; no pleasanter place in which to spend a holiday. Extraordinarily narrow winding streets full of quaint bits of architecture, flowers in dazzling profusion, and for Lanny, above all else, paintings. It was the home city of Murillo and the birth-place of Velasquez ; there were Goyas and Zurbaráns, some of them privately owned, with the owners in a very receptive mood in war-time. They all assured Lanny that they could get export permits for him, and he could have combined business with pleasure for weeks on end—had it not been that he was thinking about a baronet's grandson who might at that moment be dying in some dank dungeon.

He waited until he was quite sure that Marceline was going to do nothing but dance and shop, and Vittorio nothing but talk. Then he invited the couple for a drive, so that they could be safe from spies, and said : "I'm afraid we're not going to accomplish much in Seville. Let's arrange some pretext for visiting Cáceres, and see if we can get any word about Alfy there."

"What excuse can we find for visiting a place like that?" Vittorio wanted to know.

"There are sights to be seen, everywhere in Spain ; some Roman ruins, and an old castle—it may be the very place where Alfy is imprisoned. I can stop and look at paintings at other places on the way, and ask questions, and make it seem plausible."

"But we won't know a soul in those places!"

"I can always find some people who own paintings and might like to sell them. I have never failed to make acquaintances when I needed to."

"But, Lanny, what would we do in such a God-forsaken hole?" This was Marceline, and her brother reminded her gently that they hadn't come for a lark, but to do a job and earn some money. He put the emphasis on the latter ; so, after more discussion, they agreed to call off their social dates, and Lanny set to work to get the necessary passes.

XIV

General Aguila* of the silver hair and medals gave him a note to the commandant of the southern military district, that General Queipo de Llano whose raucous voice Lanny had been hearing off and on ever since the outbreak of the war. He was a tall thin

soldier with a heavy black moustache, one of the most vain, pompous, and violent of men. He did most of his fighting over the radio, and would lash himself into a fury and use language such as only the coarsest Spaniards would employ among themselves. Lanny had heard him denouncing those ladies of Madrid who had stood by the Loyalists; the general named them, including among them Constanca de la Mora, wife of the Spanish air chief; the general addressed them personally, telling them that he was going to capture them and give them, each one to a hundred Moors. Also he had announced that whenever any one of his soldiers was molested in Seville, he, General Queipo de Llano, would send soldiers into Triana, where the workers lived, seize the first ten men, and take them away and shoot them. This he had been regularly doing ever since.

Lanny had seen this radio general marching at the head of troops through the city streets, and had seen pious women running with arms full of flowers to strew in his path. Meeting him personally was not to be thought of as a pleasure; but fortunately a staff officer handled the matter of the travel permits. Lanny explained as usual that he was an art expert who had come here on a business errand for the Señora Villareal. He wanted very much to see the Roman ruins of Cáceres, and would like to take along his travelling-companions, an Italian air officer and his wife, who was Lanny's half-sister.

The staff officer studied the various documents which were laid before him, and replied that the roads to the north were congested by military traffic, and it was their policy to forbid other traffic; but for one as highly recommended as Señor Budd he would make an exception. They must be prepared for interruptions and delays. Lanny said he understood that, of course; he could always find something to look at in Spain, and his brother-in-law was interested in military procedures and had many colleagues and friends among the Italians. Lanny suggested that he would like to have the passes made out separately for himself and for the young couple, the reason being that his art negotiations sometimes took a long while, and they might wish to return to Seville ahead of him. This request was granted.

XV

Lanny went back to his relatives and told them that all was ready for a start. But he ran into a serious obstacle. Vittorio hesitated, looked at his wife as if to gain courage, and then began

a long explanation, the substance of which was that he had met so many of his comrades and friends who were going away to die; his heart had been touched, and it didn't seem in consonance with his honour to be going off on a personal errand which, while it mightn't do any harm to his country's cause, was surely not going to do it any good. Moreover, it was highly dangerous, and after being on the ground and giving study to it, Vittorio couldn't see any prospect of carrying it out successfully. And so on and so on.

Lanny had envisaged this as one of the possibilities of the adventure, and had thought out his course if it should happen. He must not quarrel with Vittorio or utter a single word of annoyance; above all, he mustn't mention the money which had been so generously poured out. He said: "It's all right, Vittorio, if that is what your conscience dictates. But what are you planning to do?"

"I want to help my country to the best of my ability. It has been pointed out that if I can get an artificial arm I may be able to get a staff appointment with one of our generals."

This had been a tender point with the crippled man. He went about with an empty sleeve, which he regarded as a badge of honour; but an artificial arm he looked on as something repugnant, a caricature of reality. The result had been that he couldn't even write his name, because he had no way to hold a piece of paper steady. But now, desiring to serve, he would make whatever concession of his feelings might be necessary.

"Well, that's fine," said the brother-in-law. "I understand how you feel, and wish you luck. What is Marceline going to do?"

"I shall doubtless be assigned to duty here in Seville, and we'll stay here together. What will you do?"

"Since I've made all the plans and hired a car, I suppose I might as well take the trip by myself." Then, as if it were an afterthought: "I suppose you won't mind letting me take along that extra uniform that doesn't fit you."

"Are you going to try that risky project by yourself, Lanny?"

"I thought I'd just go there and sort of drift about. The chances are a thousand to one against my being able to accomplish anything, but it won't hurt for me to have the uniform, just in case. It doesn't fit you, you know."

"I could have it altered," suggested this son of a frugal people.

"I'll bring it back to you," replied the son of a prodigal people.

"If I don't I'll get you another without fail."

30

My Life upon a Cast

I

WHEN you leave the valley of the Guadalquivir River, following the highway north from Seville, you find yourself ascending through rolling hills and before long are in the Sierra Morena. After you have topped a high pass it is no longer springtime in the beginning of March, and you may prepare yourself for chill northern breezes. This is the ancient tableland known as Estremadura, a grazing-country with sparse vegetation, plagued by locusts and droughts, just like the district of La Mancha adjoining it on the east, where Don Quixote tilted with the windmills. The procedure does not seem so fantastic when you visit the land, for the windmills are only eight feet in height and you would think they might be upset by a horse at the charge.

There is a railway this way, but it had not been equipped for the burden of a major war, so a great part of the traffic had to go by the highway. There were heavily loaded modern trucks, also ancient horse and mule wagons, and the still more ancient method of mules' backs. And just as there is a financial law that the worse currency drives out the better, so there is a traffic law that the faster traffic accommodates itself to the slower. By incessant honking of the horn Lanny could persuade a mule caravan to move over and let him get by; but he was a stranger and not sure if he was entitled to that privilege, so he fell in behind. When north-bound mules tangled with a west-bound flock of sheep and goats, he breathed yellow dust and learned new language for appealing to Spanish saints and consigning to Spanish devils.

He had resolved not to attempt travel by night, for there was no telling what a sleepy sentry might do when surprised by motor-car lights in his face. He had to stop and show his pass to Civil Guards wearing armbands with the red and gold colours of Franco. While his pass was good, he thought it was better by daylight; especially when some of the guards warned him that the front in this district, far off to the right, was loosely held; there were no trenches, and the Reds made raids occasionally. As a sergeant of the Guardia Civil explained it, "They fire a few shots, steal a few chickens, and celebrate a victory."

The traveller spent the night in Mérida, a railway-junction town through which one travelled from Madrid to Lisbon in the good old days when there had been one Spain instead of two. This ancient town had been a traffic centre for the Romans also, and they had built across the Guadiana River a huge granite bridge half a mile long, having sixty-four double arches. In the marshy floor of the valley are the remains of a circus, an amphitheatre, and an aqueduct with arches so high that they appear to be walking on stilts.

Tourists had come to inspect these sights, but now it was the military men who crowded the hotel. They showed their surprise at the appearance of an American civilian, so while eating an elaborate eight-course dinner Lanny entered into conversation and mentioned his errands in the service of art. There is no town in Spain so small or so poor that it does not have a church with paintings and sculpture, and he inquired concerning the Iglesia de Santa María, making it plain that he was one of those eccentric persons who are interested in events that happened hundreds or even thousands of years ago, to the exclusion of things now going on about them. Having read up on the district before setting out, he had no difficulty in impressing the military gentry with his scholarship.

But later in the evening when he had repaid to his room and locked the door, he became a different person. Having drawn the curtains carefully and made sure there were no peep-holes in the door or the walls, this lover of ancient art and architecture took a small radio set from one of his bags, plugged it into his electric-light socket, and turning on the faintest whisper sat with his ear within a foot of the set. He preferred Radio Madrid to Radio Seville or Radio Burgos, and one of the new crimes which Fascism had created was listening to outside radio stations, even though one did not repeat a word of what one heard.

II

The town of Cáceres, which Lanny reached on the following afternoon, had two hotels, and he chose the more expensive in the hope that it would be the better. He was told that he was fortunate in having secured the last vacant room. He engaged it for a week and settled down to make friends, an art in which he had developed skill. His clothes were right, his manners agreeable, his Spanish fair, and, most important of all, he had a purse full of money. Knowing old Europe and what it expected of America, he told his

new friends how he made his money, and that he would be grateful for their advice in finding old masters which were in private hands and might be of interest to American collectors. He did not know whether General Franco was prohibiting the exportation of art works, but he had friends who were serving the great Caudillo and might be able to obtain favours for him.

Here as everywhere was an Old Town and a New. The former always stands upon a hill, because that makes it easier to defend against swords, spears, and arrows. Cáceres Old Town has an enormous massive wall with towers and four ancient Roman gates ; inside are perhaps a dozen streets, narrow, gloomy, and overgrown with grass. The palaces which crowd them date from the sixteenth century, and Lanny wandered among them, gazing at their corner towers and wondering : " Can this be where Franco is keeping his officer prisoners ? "

Also in this Old Town are two churches, one dedicated to San Mateo and the other to Santa María la Mayor. In the latter, a Gothic structure with a lofty tower, Lanny studied a famous carved retablo and, after entering into conversation with the sacristan, asked if he might have the honour of meeting one of the priests. To this gentleman he laid himself out to be agreeable ; paid several times the customary fee for being shown the tombs of ancient noble families, and commented on paintings and statues, not merely from the point of view of art but of humanity. He spoke of the contribution which the Catholic Church had made to civilization by the glorifying of the maternal sentiments, the amelioration of manners due to the exalting of the feminine influence. It was easy for a foreigner to employ such high-flown phrases, because long words derived from the Latin are much the same in English and Spanish. The stout elderly priest beamed with pleasure at hearing these gracious utterances from a heretic ; but when Lanny added that he feared for the fate of these gentler influences at the hands of modern cults of self-aggrandizement, the padre gave no hint of realizing that his guest might be referring to Italian Fascism or Spanish Falangism.

It was the same in Cáceres New Town below the hill, so the visitor discovered ; the streets were less narrow and crooked, but the thoughts of the people were the same. He made friends with the ecclesiastical authorities of the wealthy Iglesia de Santiago, and found them interested in religious art, but having no ideas about the outside world which they cared to express. It was the same with the owner of the factory which made the famous red sausages called *chorizos* ; it was the same with the *latifundistas*, the great

landlords and owners of cork trees and phosphate mines. These were the town's leading citizens, and the American art expert paid calls upon them, and was invited to the homes of some because they had paintings to show him. They had ideas about these paintings, but concerning their own times they had nothing to say except to denounce the wicked Reds and hope that they would soon be exterminated, not merely in Spain, but in France and the Russian nest where they had been incubated.

III

Lanny didn't know the Spanish equivalent of the German *gleichgeschaltet*, but he perceived that this had been done to Cáceres, old and new. The armies of General Mola coming south had taken the town in August, and just below here had met the armies of General Franco coming north, thus establishing a line from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean and cutting off the Loyalists from contact with Portugal. They had proceeded to exterminate their enemies, not merely those who had fought but also those who had sympathized; the Generalissimo had given fair notice at the outset that this war for the destruction of Communism demanded the active aid of every Spaniard, and that anyone who thought he could be safe by merely keeping quiet would find that he had made a blunder.

So here was a town in which the young men had been drafted into the army and the older men laboured diligently to produce food and other goods, and sold them for Franco's stamped money without a murmur; in which the priests prayed for victory from the altar and came out and sprinkled the banners with holy water; in which everybody seized every opportunity to denounce the spawn of Satan, and never forgot that even six-foot walls of masonry had ears. In short, it was the sort of town which El Caudillo intended to create, maintain, and govern throughout the length and breadth of Spain: a medieval town, in which nobody had a thought which had not been sanctioned by Church authorities at least a thousand years ago; in which everybody did what the priests told him, and trembled at the faintest hint of supernatural vengeance; in which El Caudillo himself would be the "secular arm," the deputy of God endowed with God's power of attorney to do whatever he saw fit.

It wouldn't matter if the town was squalid and dreary, and if a great part of its inhabitants lived without sanitary conveniences,

plagued by fleas, bed-bugs, and lice; if the peasants of the countryside made their homes, along with their pigs and chickens, in a shelter made by a circular wall of bushes and mud four or five feet high capped by a conical roof of thatch; if they got no education whatever, and if their women and half-grown girls went barefoot and carried water for domestic use in heavy earthen *ollas*, one carried in the crook of the arm and another balanced on the head. Such hardships counted as nothing, because heaven was waiting for each and every one, and by the simple process of believing what they were taught and doing what they were told they were assured of blessedness for eternity.

IV

A sausage manufacturer, several landlords, and the director of a hospital which had once been a Jesuit college all had comfortable homes with paintings in them. All were the work of tenth-rate painters, but Lanny took them with seriousness, made notes concern them, and dropped hints about the possibility of getting a permit to export such works. The aristocracy of poverty-stricken Cáceres was delighted to discover that the war was not going to destroy all interest in culture, and when they learned that the distinguished *americano* was unmarried they even permitted him to meet their daughters. Also, they talked about world affairs; they said that Spain had become the battleground of the newest war against invading barbarians, but these barbarians had come not from the wide plains of Asia, but from the slums of the great cities of Europe. Having heard General Queipo de Llano say almost the same words over the Seville radio, Lanny was not taken by surprise. He asked whether the hosts did not feel the least uneasiness about having such large foreign armies upon their soil. The hosts replied that they had full confidence in their country's allies—and hastily changed the subject.

Lanny ate abundant meals, slept in a comfortable bed, and had an agreeable time getting to know a small town of the Spanish "Whites." From his room window which opened on the Plaza de la Constitución, he looked down through drizzling rain upon long trains of supplies and bedraggled and spiritless Blackshirts and Italian regulars wearing camouflaged ponchos. They were marching to the Jarama front, something like a hundred miles away, and from chance remarks which Lanny picked up and put together he gathered that many of them were going to a new front which Franco

was planning higher up on that same river. But to get to it they would take a long journey, all the way round the great loop which the Generalissimo had cast about Madrid, beginning at the south-west of the city and covering the west or Manzanares front, the north-west front from University City to the Guadarrama Mountains, and through these mountains eastwards until it met the Jarama at its sources. That river flows only a short distance, but that flow is to the east of the capital, and the Loyalists held that territory and clung to it tightly. If taken, it would block their only passageway to the outside world—to Cartagena and Valencia and the vital supplies that came from the Mediterranean.

So there was the issue of the war, clearly defined. If Franco could take the whole Jarama valley, some sixty or seventy miles, he could starve Madrid and force it to surrender. The report was that he was sending a great Italian army, with a few Spanish troops, all the way round the loop, to come down from the mountains in the north and open the new front. There, obviously, was going to be the scene of the next big battle, and Lanny wished he had some way to get that bit of information to the authorities in Madrid.

Taking this grim and merciless conflict as his personal affair, he would lock himself in his room, glue his ear to the radio, and listen to the strange war of words that went on all day and most of the night; a sort of open forum of the air with the whole world as audience—for the foreign correspondents listened and included it in their dispatches. It was a battle of news and propaganda, a wrestling-match in which no holds were barred. Could truth survive in such a mêlée? No one could give the answer, because it was the first time it had ever been tried—just as it was the first time the new German guns and tanks and planes had been tried, and the new German plan of bombing open cities to terrify their populations into surrender.

It gave Lanny a great thrill to hear the voice of his friend Raoul Palma, speaking from Madrid, pleading eloquently with the Spanish people to stand firm against this invasion from the Middle Ages. Another thrill to hear the voice of Constanca de la Mora, who was in Valencia working for the government. These voices came like rays of sunshine in a Stygian midnight; Lanny wondered, was he the only person in the town of Cáceres who was hearing the words? Or did others behind some of those grim stone walls lock their doors and plug the keyholes, and crouch with one ear close to a loud-speaker catching faint whispers of enlightenment and hope? Lanny thought of the words of Emerson, taught to

him by his great-great-uncle, the Unitarian preacher in New England :

One accent of the Holy Ghost
A heedless world hath never lost.

It would be fine if it were true ; but Lanny wondered.

The visitor was forced to face the uncomfortable fact that he was getting nowhere at all with the project which had brought him here. He hadn't been able to find the faintest crack in the mental masonry of Franco Spain. He tried gentle hints at a liberal idea, and never once met the slightest response. More than that he dared not try, and even that might be dangerous ; word might get about that this plausible and agreeable heretic was sowing seeds of doubt and dissatisfaction with the divinely ordained totalitarian system. And anyhow, would the officers of a desperately fighting army continue indefinitely to permit a stranger to dwell among them, no matter how high the credentials he might carry ? A man could conceivably be interested in the painting and architecture of Cáceres for a week or two, but surely not for ever !

Lanny studied the faces of the people he met. There were sour and grim ones aplenty, for the Spaniards are not a gay people, at least not in this barren and wild western part, from which so many of the *conquistadores* had come. But one might have many troubles in Estremadura without attributing them to tyranny and exploitation. Lanny, no mind reader, could only guess about this person and that, making mountains out of molehills and revolutions out of what may have been only an upset stomach or disappointment in a business deal. He continued to hesitate, because he knew that he could make only one mis-step—and then who could know how far he might tumble ?

VI

When at last he came upon what he was looking for it was by a freak of chance. He had grown somewhat careless about his radio set ; he listened late one evening and then, instead of packing it into the bag and locking it, he left it standing on the table with the intention of listening again in the morning. But he slept late, and there came a tap on his door, the waiter with his breakfast ; he got

up and unlocked the door, forgetting the set, and only after the man was in the room did he realize what a slip he had made.

The waiter's name was José. He was a man of forty or more, with thin, rather dour features, a sallow complexion, and black hair turning grey at the edges. He had a club foot, and limped somewhat; he was extremely polite, and said no unnecessary words—a perfectly trained servant, and Lanny guessed he had probably been a long time in this hotel. Watching, the visitor saw his eyes move to the radio set, just once and no more. Then Lanny turned his back and made as if beginning to shave; but he managed to get a glance in his mirror, and saw that the man, while pretending to arrange the breakfast tray, was again staring at the radio. Lanny thought: "He knows what it is, and I am in for it."

The waiter started to leave the room; but before he reached the door he turned and came back, and said in a low voice: "May I speak to the Señor for a moment?"

"Certainly," replied Lanny.

"It is not wise to leave that thing in sight. The maid is pious."

"I understand," said Lanny promptly. "Thank you. In my country, you know, everybody has such things, even the labouring-people and those who farm the land."

"I have heard about it, Señor; you are a fortunate people." His eyes moved quickly to the door; then he added: "It is not so bad that you have the thing with you, but it is where you leave the dial."

A bright light flashed in Lanny's mind. He had been listening to the government station in Madrid, and had left the dial at that point—and this man knew it! That could mean only one thing: he was familiar with radio sets and knew how to get the most dangerous of all. He, too, had been breaking the law!

So here was Lanny's chance, the one chance that fate might allow him. He must not hesitate to take it. "José, may I talk to you?" he asked softly.

"It is very dangerous, Señor." The man looked again towards the door, even though Lanny had closed it after letting him into the room. "I have duties, Señor, and if I delay they will become suspicious."

"I will say it quickly. I am a man who does not like to see other people killed. I come from a land where men are free, and can say what they think."

"I know that—"

"I want very much to have someone to talk to, someone who understands my way of thinking. I could make it well worth your while."

"I know, Señor ; but it would be dangerous for us both. I am a man who is watched very closely."

"That is why you interest me. Could you not take a drive with me in my car ?"

"Impossible, Señor. If they should see us they would shoot me."

"Isn't there some place where we could meet at night, if I promised to be very careful and make certain I am not being followed ?"

"They watch everything and everybody. I am a lame man, and it is hard for me to go anywhere without being recognized."

"I go to the homes of different people in this town and I do not think I am followed. Just beyond the house of the alcalde is a great oak tree and it is very dark under it. If I parked my car there at ten o'clock this evening, I do not think anybody would notice whether I left the car or sat in the back seat ; and if you were to pass by and step in quickly, I could lock the doors, and if we spoke in low tones as we are doing now I do not think it would be noted. If you walk by without speaking I will understand that you are being watched, and I will not speak to you. You can come back later on, and be sure that I will not notice you until you have stepped into the car."

"Very well, Señor, I will try it ; but you must know that it might cost me my life if there was a mistake."

VII

Lanny spent the day studying the ruins of Cáceres's Moorish alcázar, now serving as a reservoir ; but while he sat pretending to examine elaborately carved columns, he was thinking over the perilous step he was about to take. The man might be a clever agent, sent to find out about him ; he might be a rascal who would take Lanny's money and then sell him out ; he might be a coward, a liar, a blackmailer—a variety of things which would be extremely uncomfortable for a man who was alone in a hostile country under war conditions. Lanny had to face the fact that what he was doing constituted him a spy, nothing less, and if they caught him it might be a shooting matter.

But he wasn't going away without making a try, and he surely couldn't expect a better chance than this. The episode of the radio set bore the marks of genuineness, and to refuse to accept it would be fearing his fate too much. He must trust this man—but how far ? Should he try to get the man to betray himself, if by chance he was

a spy? Perhaps by doing that Lanny would make him suspicious and afraid. Perhaps the wiser course would be to come straight out with the truth and win the man's confidence. Like a general contemplating a battle, Lanny strove to foresee all contingencies and plan how to meet them; he carried on in his mind imaginary conversations—but the trouble was, he knew so little about this lame waiter, and so could think of so many conversational turns.

At the appointed hour Lanny sat in the darkness under the aged oak tree, in the rear seat of the car, waiting and listening for footsteps. The car door was unclosed, so that it could be opened quickly and without a sound; even so, he was startled when without warning it was pulled open and a dark form slipped into the seat beside him. The door was closed, again without a sound, showing that the man knew something about cars. "All right, Señor."

"You have not been followed?"

"I don't think so; but speak low and quickly."

"I do not know you, José, but I assume that you are an honest man and that I can trust you. I ask you to give me your word that you will not tell anyone what I am going to tell you. I will make you the same promise: nothing will ever cause me to speak a word about you, or to reveal anything you tell me. Is that a bargain?"

"Yes, Señor, you can trust me for that. But you must know that I am a poor man, and a cripple, and I am in a bad position. They put me in jail and came near to shooting me last summer when they took Cáceres; it was only my *patrón*, my boss, who saved me; he could not easily find a man who will work such long hours, and who knows what ladies and gentlemen require, and can speak a little of the different languages."

"They shot many people here?"

"Hundreds, Señor. They shot them if they had bruised shoulders, proving that they had been firing guns; they shot them if they smelled of powder; they shot them if they had some enemy who whispered that they had been talking with the Reds, or had sold them goods, or whatever it might be. They are still shooting them, every night."

"I have been hearing shots and wondering if that was it."

"Last night they shot a school-teacher, a woman they said was a spy. She had been hiding in a culvert for a long time, and two of her pupils had been bringing her food. Yesterday someone heard one of the children say: 'I have to take the sausage to the teacher.' The soldiers followed the child. That is the way it goes, Señor."

"I have been trying to find someone who will talk to me, but with no success."

"They do not know what to make of you, Señor. Some are certain that you are an agent, but they do not know for which side. Others think that you are just one of those rich Americans who have a great deal of money and do strange things with it."

VIII

Lanny began his story, varying it only slightly from the facts, to heighten its romantic aspects. He said :

"I have a young friend, an Englishman, a noble and generous-hearted lad. His father has been my friend from boyhood, and I watched him grow up. From his childhood I thought he would marry my sister, who is of the same age. But he became a Socialist, and she did not care for that, and jilted him. Then he decided that he wished to fight for the government of Spain. Maybe that was foolish—I do not say. Anyhow, he came to Madrid as a pilot; his plane was brought down, and I heard that he had been injured and brought as a prisoner to Cáceres. My sister is broken-hearted about him, and so are his mother and father, who are my dearest friends. We were not able to find out anything about him, so I said : 'I will go to Cáceres and see if I can find out where he is and how he is being treated, and perhaps send food to him.' That is not precisely being a spy, and it ought not to be considered an evil thing."

There was a silence. "It would be considered very bad, Señor," said the man, at last. "You are in a position of great danger."

"Perhaps so; but I had to trust somebody. Can you tell me if there are any war prisoners in this town?"

"Yes, Señor, there are some; but it is a great secret and no one dares to talk about it."

"Do you know where the officers are kept?"

Again a silence. The man peered out into the darkened street before he whispered: "They are in the round tower of the old barracks."

"Do you know how many there are?"

"About fifty, I believe."

"Do you know the names of any?"

"No, Señor; it might cost a man's life to ask such questions."

"They don't ever let them out, I suppose."

"Oh, no; how could they?"

"Have you heard anything about how they are treated?"

"I have heard that it is very badly."

"Do you know anybody who might find out if my friend is among those prisoners?"

Another silence, still longer. "It would be an extremely dangerous thing to attempt, Señor."

"Listen," said Lanny. "I very much need help, and am willing to pay for it. I am not a rich man, but I earn money dealing in paintings, and whatever I have or can get I am willing to spend to try to make life easier for this young Englishman. I take it that the men who guard the prisoners are not all saints, and that one of them might like to earn some money; perhaps one has a girl who might ask questions; it might even be that there is someone who is not altogether loyal to the uniform he wears. I can form no idea, but perhaps you can. Here are a couple of hundred-peseta notes, and you may keep one of them for yourself and pay the other to whoever can find out for me."

"The notes are too large, Señor. A poor man could not spend that much money in this town without attracting attention. And anyhow, if I help you, I would rather it be for the cause. We Spaniards are a people who believe with great ardour and do not give up easily. Tell me just what you wish to know."

"I want to know where my friend is and how he is. He was wounded, and may have recovered, or he may be ill. I want to know how he is being treated. I would be glad if he could be told that I am in town. There is a word that would tell him that; the word is 'Romney.' Can you remember it?"

"'Romney.' I will learn it."

"It is the name of an English painter, and it means nothing to anybody else, but my friend will understand it, and it will tell him that I am near and that the person who speaks it is a friend."

"Romney. And what is the name of your friend?"

"Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson." Lanny said it several times and made the waiter repeat it. Then he said: "Shall we meet here again?"

"Never in the same place," said the other. He named another dark street near the home of another citizen whom Lanny had called upon. Evidently he knew a lot about what the visitor had been doing in the town. He said: "I will give you a sign when I have news and when we are to meet again. Now if you will turn the car into the alley I will slip out, and you can back the car, and it will be as if you were turning round."

Lanny did this, and in a flash the man was gone in the darkness. Lanny drove to the hotel, saying to himself that it wouldn't be many

hours now before he knew whether or not José was a spy. But then he thought: "Maybe they will lead me on; or maybe they will use me to trap somebody else." The role of secret agent is stimulating to the imagination; at any rate to Lanny's.

IX

Next morning when José brought the breakfast of coffee with hot milk, orange juice, eggs, and rolls, he whispered: "I think it can be arranged, Señor; but it will take time."

Lanny replied: "I will try to keep busy in the meantime."

The sausage manufacturer owned a painting of the Blessed Virgin, showing her bosom cut open and revealing a bleeding heart with a dove sitting on it. It looked like a Spanish "primitive," and was a real primitive in the sense that it was rather crudely painted; nobody had ever heard of the artist, but the manufacturer insisted that he was famous, and wanted a thousand pesetas. The work had genuine feeling of a sort, and Lanny thought that the Mother Superior of some convent in South Bend, Indiana, might accept it as a genuine primitive and pay a thousand dollars for it. He wouldn't have to bother with it personally, for there are dealers who specialize in Catholic art; even if he dropped the painting overboard on the way to New York, it would be worth the price to him now.

He made the purchase, and offered a cheque on his bank in Cannes, thereby causing great anxiety in the soul of a maker of *chorizos*. Lanny agreed in writing that the painting would not become his property until the cheque had been cleared; which, of course, gave him a perfect excuse for remaining in Cáceres for a while. Everybody knew about the transaction in a few hours, and it caused a stir in the bosoms of other collectors of Blessed Virgins. As a favour and a proof of friendship, the sausage gentleman permitted Lanny to hang the painting in his hotel room in the interim, and this had an excellent effect upon the chambermaid who was pious. Every morning before she made Lanny's bed she crossed herself before the holy image. By this diplomatic stroke Lanny appealed to both the religious and the worldly elements of the Spanish character, and disproved once for all the saying that one cannot serve God and Mammon.

X

On the third morning José whispered : " I have news, Señor. Your friend is there."

" Is he well ? "

" As well as you could expect, and he has your message. I will meet you at the place appointed."

It was a rainy night and apparently the lame waiter had been doing some travelling about town, for he was wet and shivered a little ; Lanny had a rug in the car and wrapped him in it, for it would surely be inconvenient to have him laid up with pneumonia just now.

His story was quickly told. In the years before the coming of the republic he had worked as a shipping-clerk for one of the wool merchants of the town and had boarded with a working-class family ; the daughter of this family was married to a man who delivered supplies to the barracks where the prisoners were confined. José had been to see her and recited a well-invented tale about a cousin of his who had gone to England and become a servant in a wealthy household, and had just managed to get a cipher message to José, telling him that the son of this family, a pilot, was a prisoner in Cáceres, and that generous sums of money could be earned by someone in the town who was willing to aid this unfortunate young man.

" I told her," said José, " that this message had been hidden in the box of a safety razor which my cousin had sent me from England. It happens that I have a razor marked ' Sheffield ' ; I bought it on a trip to Salamanca some time ago, and so nobody can disprove my story. You will see that it protects you, as I promised to do."

" Yes," said Lanny ; " it is well devised. Tell me, is this woman pious ? "

" If she had been that I should not have gone to her. She likes money, and hoards it, so it is reasonably safe to give it to her. Her husband paid a part of it to one of the guards."

" But how are we to know that the woman, is not lying, or that the guard is not lying to the woman ? "

" I know the woman, Señor ; in the old days we were somewhat as you might say intimate, and that makes a certain bond of understanding in future years. I think she is telling me the truth, and she has every reason to do it, because she has the hope that there may be more money coming. You understand, Señor, in a time like this a woman who has children and sees the cost of food rising and does

not know what calamities may befall her town, is made happy by having something under a brick in her hearth, even though it is only paper and the course of the war may make it worthless."

"How about the guard?" inquired the American.

"The guard, also, will be hoping for more money; and what he had to do was very simple. It involved no great risk to stand outside a cell door and whisper the word 'Romney' into the ear of a prisoner. If the Señor wishes to pay a little more money we can perhaps get a note from your friend. I suppose you would know his handwriting. It would be a great risk for him to sign his name."

"There is no need of that. He will know things to write which will satisfy me. How much money will that take?"

"Another handful of change, Señor."

"I wish that you would keep a share for yourself."

"Señor, I am no saint, but this is a terrible time, and we Spaniards have to choose sides. A lame man cannot fight for his cause, but when a chance like this comes, he can feel that he is as good as any soldier. I have my pride, you see. I could not live in this land and be without it."

"You mean there is nothing I can do for you?"

"Señor, you have a home, and it must be that you have people to serve you there. How much more I would like to serve you and your friends than the sort of people who come to a provincial hotel either in war or in peace. What I have thought is that if I should prove myself an honest man, some day you might give me work, and I could live in a place where I do not have to cringe with fear every time an independent idea crosses my mind. I could not travel with you, of course, but some day I might manage to make the trip, if I only knew that some kind person would receive a crippled man and give him work that he could do. I know enough French to serve meals and I could easily learn more."

"That is well said, José, and it's a bargain. I will give you another name to learn, the place where I live—Juan-les-Pins, on the French Riviera. It is neither a Spanish Juan nor a French, but Provençal, which is akin to your Catalan. You had better not have it written, but fix it well in your memory." Lanny taught him both the spelling and the pronunciation, which were puzzling to foreigners: Jou-ahn-lay-pan, with the first letter soft, as in French, and the "n's" as nasal as possible. "All you have to do is to get to Marseilles and then travel eastwards on the autobus." That is a word known in both Spanish and French.

XI

So it came about that on the following evening, when Lanny ordered a bottle of mineral water so as to receive a visit from his friend, there was placed in his hand a tiny pellet of paper which, on being spread out, proved to contain three words of Latin: "*Bella gerant alii.*" Only fifteen letters, but they served as well as a whole code-book for the grandson of Budd Gunmakers. They are part of a verse from the poet Ovid, and had constituted a sort of underground jest concerning the Budd family ever since the World War days, before Alfie had been born. They had been quoted to Lanny by an elderly Swiss diplomat, long since gone to his fathers. "Let others make war!" The words had been apropos of a letter from Robbie Budd in Connecticut to his son in Juan, urging the son to keep neutral in the war, and explaining that it had been the role of the Budds throughout the generations to make weapons and sell them, but not to use them.

"Let others make war, you make love"—so the ancient Roman poet had written. A century or two ago some wit in Europe had paraphrased the verse, apropos of the success of the Empress Maria Theresa in enlarging her dominion by marrying off her sons and daughters. "Let others make war, you, happy Austria, marry." Lanny, the smart Aleck, only sixteen at the time, had thought it fun to write: "Let others make war, you, happy Budds, make money." His father hadn't appreciated the jest, but Sir Alfred and Rick had, and through the years the verse had been quoted as a sally against the unpopular munitioneers, the "merchants of death" as they were called. Alfie had taken his turn as the smart Aleck, and so now the verse served well as code. Did it contain a trace of double meaning? Was the young pilot saying to his father's best friend: "Help me out of this mess and I'll go back and settle down in Magdalen College"?

XII

The conspirators had agreed upon a place of meeting; and seated in the car as before, Lanny whispered: "That was a message from my friend. And now, what we must do is to find some way to get him out of Spain."

He felt the other start. "But, Señor, that is madness!"

"It may seem so at first, José; but it is what I came here for, and I hope to have your help."

"But it is out of all reason. The walls of the tower are several metres thick. There are guards inside and out, all the time, and they are armed."

"But they are human beings, and each of them has his weaknesses. We must find one of them that we can deal with. Prisoners do sometimes escape."

"But, Señor, even if you could get your friend out of the tower, how could you get him out of Spain? All the roads are guarded, and once the alarm was given, they would telephone to every town and every car on the roads would be searched."

"It is necessary that we get him out at night, and in some way so that he will not be missed until morning. That will be time enough for me, and I will assume the rest of the task."

"But you ask things that are impossible! Prisons are not so carelessly run."

"Listen, my friend, and put your wits to work. Remember that those who guard the prison are men like yourself; they sometimes sleep, they are sometimes lazy, they like to get drunk, and they will follow a pretty woman who smiles at them. They know that all comforts and pleasures depend upon money, and that it is a good thing to have, in youth, in old age, and all the times between. Do not waste your time calculating the thickness of the walls, for we do not mean to dig through them or to blow them up. We are going to find somebody who will unlock the doors for us."

"Such a man would be shot in a few hours, Señor, and he would know it."

"Let me tell you that I have been thinking about this problem most of my time for a month, and I have in my head a hundred different plans which would take me all night to outline. You say that the husband of your one-time *novia* delivers goods to the barracks. Does he drive into the courtyard?"

"Yes, Señor, but always by day, never by night."

"Does he take anything away from the barracks—say, empty boxes, or loads of trash, or of garbage?"

"I do not know, Señor."

"Then you can see there are a lot of questions you might have been asking. Do you know whether the laundry is done on the place, or whether it is sent out?"

"I doubt if there is any, Señor; surely not very much."

"One big basketful at the month's end might be enough. I am not proposing to rescue all the prisoners in the tower."

"Señor, speak more carefully, I beg you!"

"All right; but do not mind if I make jokes now and then, for

that is our American way. Deep in my heart I may be greatly frightened, but since I am resolved to do the job, I do not admit my fear even to myself. You understand how that is ? ”

“ *Sí, Señor ; los americanos son una gente milagrosa.* ” Lanny didn’t know that last word, but guessed it was “ miraculous,” and that was what in his secret heart he wanted right now ; a plain old-fashioned miracle—Joshua with his trumpet to blow down granite walls several metres thick, or an angel with a flaming sword to command jailers to unlock a series of doors.

XIII

With care and tact Lanny lured the anxious cripple into discussing and analysing some of the different plans for getting Alfy out of the barracks tower. The American was especially interested in what happened to a prisoner who died ; did they provide a coffin for him, or did they simply dump him into a cart and carry him off to the cemetery ? And did they do this by day or only by night ? Did they have a doctor to examine the dead man, or did they make sure with a bullet ? Did they have a special hearse, or did they press into service whatever came along ? All these were important questions ; and it didn’t help José to insist that it would take a long time to collect the answers. Lanny said : “ It may be just a problem of finding someone of the guards who has a girl that wants money. ”

He asked about the executions ; and on this point the waiter was better informed. The Spanish people are fascinated by the idea of death, with which they have been kept familiar through the centuries ; the horror story of the prison tower had been told in whispers in every kitchen and every *posada* of the town. New prisoners were constantly being brought and apparently it was the practice to keep down the total, so some were weeded out. No one knew the basis on which the choice was made ; but at midnight you heard the night-bell ring, and it was the priest coming to perform his duties. You heard footsteps in the corridors, and then the ringing of the *sacred* bell. It was the ceremony of saving the soul of any condemned man who might chance to be a believer ; it could not be performed wholesale, but had to be repeated separately for each and every such soul. You heard doors unlocking and being closed again ; this might go on for quite a while, depending upon how many of the doomed happened to be of the faith. You heard cries and moans ; sometimes men became hysterical ; others were defiant, and cried :

"*Viva la República !*" A terrible story, not to be dwelt upon too long by one who contemplated putting his head into that trap.

Lanny had the idea that it might be possible for Alfy to be warned in advance and given a chance to slip into the condemned group, and then slip out again, either at the cemetery or while the carts were being loaded. The trembling José, who already saw himself in a cart, insisted that it was unthinkable, because there were always many soldiers in the firing-squad, and so many could not be bought. "One will betray us, Señor, and he will aid in the shooting of the rest."

"Take it easy," Lanny said; "we are going to use our brains and prove them better than those of the soldiers." He waited a few moments, and then began:

"Let me tell you about my home, José. It is a beautiful estate on the Cap d'Antibes. From the loggia you look out across bright blue water and see the sun go down behind red mountains. I have lived there ever since I can remember, and we have never known any trouble or danger—unless you count the fact that I saw a submarine put a spy ashore during the World War. Ever since I can remember, our home has been managed by a Provençal woman named Leese. She began as a cook, and because she was capable and devoted gradually came to be a sort of steward. Now she is very old, and someone will have to take her place. You might serve as butler, and when you proved your capacity you would have charge. My mother does a great deal of entertaining, but there are plenty of servants and no one is overworked; also, it is interesting, because many famous people come there. Do you think you would like to have such a position?"

"I think of nothing in the world that I would like better, Señor."

"It is important to get clear that France is a free country. In your off-hours you can go into Cannes and attend a public meeting on any subject that interests you. If you have an opinion, you may express it, and there is very little chance of a police agent spying upon you and reporting you."

"That is something worth taking many risks for, I admit, Señor."

"We all have to take risks now, José, for that is the only way such freedoms can survive. If you should help a noble young man to escape with his life, you would not only have earned the gratitude of two families, but you would also have done something to gratify that Spanish pride of yours. You would enjoy a good conscience, which is a rarer luxury than it ought to be."

"Señor," said the lame waiter, "I mean to help you and your

noble young friend. But you must know that that wonderful position which you hold out to me also has a part in my decision."

Lanny chuckled. "*Amigo mío*," he said, "the human soul is complicated, and may have more than one motive. Reflect that in some off-hour, when you sit in the *bistro* and sip your glass of wine and read the news, it will be pleasant to remember that you were once a hero. You may enjoy telling the fellow at the next table how you saved the life of the grandson of an English baronet, and how the baronet gave you this gold watch with your name in it. Furthermore, among the full-bosomed Provençal girls who come to work in my mother's home you will find one to be your wife; and your story will please her—especially when I certify that it is true."

"*Sí, sí, Señor*," said the man, tempted in so many ways.

31

Put It to the Touch

I

LANNY had by now brought the well-to-do elements of the population of Cáceres to a state of no slight agitation. Five different persons among them possessed what they declared were old masters, and were negotiating with the art expert on that basis. Each had named a high price and was now undergoing the painful process of deflation. Each knew about the others, and was green with envy at the thought of their possible success; but all told their hopes and fears to one another, because the ways of an American multimillionaire were past understanding, and each hoped to gain some news in return for that which he imparted.

In between negotiations, Lanny locked himself in his room and put his ear to the radio whispers. The war of the air was continuing with undiminished ferocity. Every night General Queipo de Llano in Seville poured ridicule upon the Madrid leaders and told obscene anecdotes about them; every night the government stations answered by calling upon the people to save themselves from the horrors of medieval reaction. Both sides told the news, in so far as it could be made to favour them; both sides claimed all they dared, hoping to fill the hearts of the enemy with discouragement and fear. Lanny, who had learned to know the different stations and the voices and

personalities of their announcers, balanced the claims of one side against the admissions of the other; he followed his plan of marking on a map the places where the fighting was reported to be taking place.

By this means he gradually became aware of a great event of history. An Italian army of thirty or forty thousand men, part Blackshirts and part regulars, had been conveyed by train and by road round the loop to the west and north of Madrid; round the Guadarrama Mountains, covered by snow at the end of February, to strike at the capital from the north-east. Two roads come down from that direction and join; one of them the main highway from Barcelona, over which Lanny had travelled with Raoul Palma returning from their visit to the capital. Not far to the east lies Calatayud, where the purchase of the Comendador had been consummated; this town had been taken by General Mola at the outbreak of the rebellion, and Lanny had since learned from Raoul that his brother Estéban had fled into the Pyrenees and was now fighting with the people's armies in Catalonia.

Down the broad valley of the Henares River and the neighbouring valleys came the triumphant Nationalists, planning to reach the Jarama and join the Italian brigades on that front. At first Franco had advanced without much opposition, taking Sigüenza, then Brihuega; after that his radios continued to announce new triumphs—but Lanny observed that they stopped naming places. Suddenly the Loyalist radios broke out in a clamour of delight, declaring that in the midst of an unseasonable storm of snow and rain their militia had fallen upon an Italian mechanized column, a mass of tanks and artillery crowded into a stretch of the highway at Guadalajara, and after three days of incessant fighting had driven it back in a rout which had not been equalled since Caporetto in the World War.

Lanny remembered the town of Guadalajara very well, having passed through it three times. Leaving Madrid with Raoul, they had stopped to look at the Palacio, a fifteenth-century building used as an orphanage; they had paid two pesetas to be shown round it, and Lanny wondered what had become of all those forlorn-looking little boys and girls, so carefully segregated. The other times had been on his second trip, when he had come from Valencia and detoured by this route so as to be safer from enemy planes. At Guadalajara he had entered the main highway, crowded with miserable fugitives; returning, he had found it the same, and had turned into the mountains toward Cuenca, where he had picked up the peasant family.

He pictured the broad river valley, now soaked with rain and snow which had turned to slush, and churned into red mud by the

tracks of tanks and artillery. Day after day he listened, for the battle and pursuit lasted a full week. The rocky fields and scrub-oak forests were strewn with the wreckage of planes and tanks, and vehicles of every sort; field guns, anti-aircraft guns, machine-guns, and mortars; shells and empty shell cases, ammunition boxes, tools, haversacks—all the wreckage of a terrible struggle. Lanny listened to the voice of an American correspondent, describing from a Madrid station this field of slaughter where several thousand Italian bodies were strewn, their waxy grey faces wet with cold rain.

After that he couldn't doubt that it was true, and it pleased him better than any news he had heard since the invention of radio. It seemed the judgment of human decency upon Mussolini and his crew; it seemed the end of that monstrous growth of Fascism which Lanny had been watching for a decade and a half. To him Il Duce was one thing more than any other—the murderer of Matteotti; and here at last was punishment meted out. Lanny listened to descriptions of the crowds filling the Puerta del Sol, hysterical with joy; he had to stand in front of the mirror in his room and wipe the smiles from his face and acquire a sombre expression to match those which he would meet in the hotel dining-room. Eight courses of grief they ate, hardly daring to put into words what they knew. Lanny wondered: "How did they know it? Had they been unable to resist the temptation to listen to forbidden stations? Or had they heard whispers from some other person who had listened?" Certainly the Franco radios hadn't told, and yet everybody knew!

II

José came to Lanny's room with the breakfast, beaming like a sunrise. "Pardon me, Señor. This is the only place in the hotel where I dare to enjoy my life."

When Lanny agreed to forgive him he whispered: "I have news for you, Señor. Things go fast. Will you meet me to-night?" He needed to say no more, for at each rendezvous he had named a spot for the next. He was getting to enjoy the intrigue, in spite of his terrors. For the benefit of the other servants he had invented a romance; a mysterious woman was receiving him, and he had made it so real that he had a hard time keeping other men from following him.

José had indeed made progress. Using Lanny's money, the husband of his one-time *novia*, or sweetheart, had got one of the guards of the prison drunk, and this fellow had talked freely about

his superiors. José poured out a mass of gossip, and Lanny listened closely. His attention became centred upon a certain Capitán Vazquez, a recently recruited officer of the Guardia Civil who was in charge of the prison at intervals. It was said that he came from Barcelona and had a bad record there. "You know how it is in big cities," said the waiter; "it is like the gangsters that we see in your cinemas. But these gangsters shot union leaders."

"That has been known to happen in America and also in France," replied Lanny. "We are not going to find any noble-minded idealists among prison-keepers."

"This Capitán has a girl in the town and they say that he beats her; also, he frequents a gambling-place, and he is in debt there."

"We could hardly ask for more," said the American, with a smile.

"He is a very tough *hombre*, Señor."

"What we want him to do will only take a few minutes, and it will pay him more money than he ever saw in his life before. That ought to satisfy the toughest."

"No matter how much they get, they want more."

Lanny chuckled. "My father tells about a landowner in his home state who said that he was not greedy, he only wanted the land next to his own. I gather that you have such in Estremadura."

They discussed the problem of how to approach this Catalonian gangster. It was like the belling of the cat in Aesop's fable. José shrank, and said: "It will do no good for any of us poor men to talk to him. He will want to see our money, and if we show it he will demand where did we get it and when can we get more. I could not tell this man a story about having got the money in a box with a razor."

Lanny thought for a while. "Sooner or later I have to take the plunge; and how could I expect a likelier prospect?"

"It will be frightfully dangerous, Señor."

"I will be tactful and not say too much at first." He might have added: "I am the son of a munitions salesman, and learned in boyhood how to deal with shady characters." But another of the things he had learned in boyhood was not to say everything that came into his head.

"Do you suppose this Capitán would come to some secret place to meet me?"

"It would do no harm to suggest it."

"Can a message be delivered to him?"

"If the messenger is paid, and if he can say that you sent him."

"Have your messenger say that the American is expert, who is

staying at the hotel wishes to speak to him privately, and that his car will be under the live-oak near the alcalde's house at ten o'clock to-morrow night. Here is money for the messenger, and keep for yourself whatever portion is safe for you to own."

"*Si, sí, Señor,*" whispered the man, still agitated.

III

The very ancient town of Alcántara lies some thirty miles to the north-west of Cáceres. It is on the River Tagus, and has a famous bridge which the Romans built of solid granite blocks without the use of mortar. It is the birth-place of the Order of Alcántara, dating back seven hundred years, and the ruins of the old church of the knights are still to be seen. In short, it is a place which a connoisseur visiting this district for the first time would be reluctant to miss. Lanny came down to his breakfast next morning and chatted about it with a young staff lieutenant of the local garrison whom he had come to know well. He said: "Do you suppose I could travel there on my pass which reads to Cáceres?"

"I don't think anybody would object," was the reply. "There are no military secrets in Alcántara. But I'll get you a pass from our headquarters if you wish."

"I should be in your debt, *mi Teniente.*"

"It is only a short way to the border of Portugal, Señor Budd; and if you smuggle any good English whisky, you may bring me a bottle."

"I didn't know about the smuggling," replied the American, "but I will try to find out."

"It is forbidden, Señor—but still some insist upon doing it." The officer smiled, with what might have been a slight trace of a wink. He was a tall and thin young fellow with a little black moustache, a weak chin, and a long line of distinguished ancestors. "When do you intend going?" he inquired.

"To-day, if it is agreeable."

"Well, come to the office for the pass."

"I will drive you over, if you say so."

Thus Lanny set out on an expedition. The roads were poor, but the valley of the Tagus, composed of bare rounded hills, was green with early spring. There was military traffic on the valley road, most of it east-bound, from Portugal. Lanny practised the device of getting behind an empty military truck and following its ill-smelling wake. In Alcántara he really looked at the ruins, for he

would have to talk about what he had seen. The bridge is impressive, having six massive piers, two of them in the water, and in the centre of the bridge is a fortified gateway. The town is on a bluff, and the river flows through a gorge.

Seven miles farther on is the Portuguese border, and thereafter the river forms the border between the two countries for a matter of forty or fifty miles. That was the part in which Lanny was interested; he drove on until he came to a place where the stream widened and the land flattened out. He saw a small farmhouse not far from the water's edge, and turned into a grass-grown lane.

The family was at their midday meal, and when the dogs barked, the peasant came out, wiping his mouth on his sleeve. When he was told that this very elegant Señor wished to share his food, he was embarrassed and said that he had nothing fit for such a person; but Lanny replied: "In Italy, where I live, I walk in the country, and all the peasants are my friends. I know what they eat, and desire nothing better." So they brought up a stool for him, and put before him a mess of cooked greens with olive oil added, fresh dark bread, dried olives, and cheese; in his honour they produced a jug of red wine, and he repaid them by chatting freely, telling about being a correspondent for an Italian paper, desiring to know what the plain people of Spain thought about the war. To Lanny's surprise they began to argue, and many of the things they said would surely not have passed the censor. They were a self-confident and poorly disciplined peasantry.

IV

They didn't want to be paid for the meal, but Lanny pressed a few pesetas into the man's hand, and said he desired a longer interview; so they strolled down to the river-bank, where Lanny asked if the fishing was good, and then commented on the beauty of the yellow-brown stream. "I suppose there is a lot of traffic across it," he remarked.

"No, Señor," was the reply; "that is strictly forbidden."

Lanny smiled. "I know; but some cross, I suppose, in spite of regulations? Not in the day-time, of course, but after dark?"

"It may be, Señor; I wouldn't know about it."

"The roads all over Spain are crowded with military traffic," remarked the visitor; "but I am told that one can get to Lisbon without great delays. I suppose that if one could find a boat, and was willing to pay for the trouble, it might be possible to be set across."

"It might be, Señor. It is not a thing for me to discuss."

"What do you suppose a boatman would charge for such a service?"

"Really, I cannot say; it would be a dangerous thing for a poor man to do."

"I have a friend who might be wishing to cross. Of course I might try to hire a boat and row him myself; but, not knowing the river, I shouldn't be able to get back to the same landing-place in the dark. It would be a question of finding a man to row the two of us across and then bring me back. Can you think of one who would do that if I paid him enough?"

A silence. Then: "What would you think was enough, Señor?"

"I don't know. It is not such a long row. A man ought to be able to go and come in half an hour, wouldn't you say?"

"Possibly. But they have guards who patrol the river, especially now in war-time."

"It is a long river, and perhaps the guards have regular hours. Suppose that a traveller crossed between three and four in the morning, would there be much chance of his being seen?"

"No, Señor, I wouldn't think so."

"If one wraps a cloth round each oar, that would muffle the sounds, I am told."

"That might be a good idea, Señor."

"Let us say that somebody were to pay five hundred pesetas for the service. Do you think it would be possible to find a boatman at that price?"

"The money to be paid before the boat starts, Señor?"

"One hundred to be paid before we start, two hundred to be paid when you set the passenger ashore on the other side, and two hundred when you bring me back to this place. Also a *propina* for good luck."

There was a long silence. The man knew now why the good-looking stranger had been so sociable and why he had paid so liberally for his meal. He didn't dare to look into the stranger's face, but kept his eyes fixed on the opposite river-bank, perhaps ferrying himself back and forth in imagination. Finally he said: "I think it might be possible to find a man at that price."

"Very good," declared Lanny. "Will the boat be at this place?"

"Sí, Señor."

"Bueno. I cannot tell what day my friend will wish to come, but it will be in the next two or three days. May I suggest that you keep your dogs inside, so that they will not make so much noise? I will knock on your door, and hope that it will not be too hard to awaken

you. Take my advice and say nothing about it, even to members of your family."

"*Si, Señor.*"

"One thing more. I am staying with friends, and I promised to bring home a good fat hen for dinner. Would you sell me one?"

"I will ask my wife about it, Señor, since the fowls are hers."

"Charge me a good price, so that both you and your wife can be sure to feel friendly to me." The peasant grinned, and after consultation he caught a chicken and tied up its legs and wings. He said twenty pesetas, and Lanny gave him thirty. Long, long ago Robbie Budd had taught his son that this was the way to make people like you.

V

Lanny drove back to the small town of Alcántara, and found a liquor shop in which he purchased two bottles of English whisky which he could be reasonably certain had been smuggled; also two empty bottles, and filled one of them with water. Then he found a money-changer and bought some Portuguese money. In the window of a stationery shop he noticed some drawings of peasant boys and girls which seemed to show talent, and he bought several of them for a handful of pesetas. He decided as an extra precaution to study the ruins of the ancient church of the knightly order, so as to have plenty of things to talk about in Cáceres. Then he drove back, arriving shortly after dark.

Before entering the town he stopped at a deserted spot by the roadside and performed a rather grisly operation. He got out of the car and took the trussed-up hen and carefully broke her neck. When the kicking had stopped, he opened his pocket-knife, cut off the creature's head, and thrust the neck into the empty bottle, holding it there until most of the blood had drained out. Then he threw the carcass into the underbrush for the first fox or whatever came along. He corked the bottle of blood tightly and washed his hands with the water from the other bottle. After hiding both bottles in the car, he drove on, and after showing his pass to the road control at the outskirts, he entered the town.

But he didn't put his car in the hotel garage; he parked it on the street near by, locked it, and went to his room. First he washed his hands again and inspected his clothing, to make sure that it had no blood-spots; then he rang and ordered some food, which meant José.

"Everything is arranged, Señor," whispered the waiter. "Your man will meet you at ten o'clock to-night. He asked no questions."

"O.K.," said the American, in the world's new universal language.

He repaired to the room of the lieutenant and gave him the two bottles of whisky, assuring him that he had personally seen them smuggled, a jest which the young Spaniard appreciated. He opened one of the bottles and Lanny drank enough for politeness. He showed the drawings he had bought, and told about the sights he had seen: that magnificent bridge and the other Roman ruins, and how the Romans had adapted the arch, and how the *pax romana* had protected the world for centuries. The young officer had neglected his history studies, it appeared; he was interested to learn that this region had been the ancient Lusitania, the wealthiest part of the great Roman province of Hispania. He wanted to know what was the reason it had fallen into decay, and Lanny explained his notion that it is the practice of civilized man to cut the forests from the land which he inhabits, and as a result the top soil is washed away and deserts are manufactured. Before many more centuries there would be no place for men to dwell except in the tropics, and perhaps they would go back to living in the tree-tops.

"*Mi Teniente*" became melancholy over this prospect—and over the whisky—and confided to his American friend that the staff was in a hellish state because of what had happened at Guadalajara. "You have no idea how bad it is," he declared, and the other allowed himself to be told and promised not to pass on the distressful word. Finally he said that he was tired after his trip and took his departure. The last words he heard from the dark-eyed and dark-haired son of a don was the remark: "I wish I had known it was possible to earn so much money by studying old paintings and ruins. I would surely never have entered the military academy."

VI

In his own room, with the door locked, Lanny stretched out to rest, but did not sleep. He was rehearsing a conversation in his mind—many conversations, for each had a tendency to branch out and take unexpected courses. Some of these were alarming; but Lanny kept insisting to himself: "I cannot go away without one try."

He got up and packed a suitcase. At the bottom he laid the civilian suit which he had had made for Alfy, and on top of that the Italian uniform which Vittorio had had made. In one corner, wrapped in a towel, he put a safety razor, a tube of shaving-cream, a piece of soap, and a bottle of water. He looked at the suitcase and

then, at ten minutes before ten in the evening, he carried it to his car. He drove round several blocks, to make sure he was not being followed, and then stopped in the shadow of the oak tree just beyond the alcalde's house. He got into the back seat of his car, leaving the door unclosed, and then sat still.

Almost at once he became aware of a dark bulk climbing in beside him. The car creaked and bent slightly under the weight, and the seat beside Lanny sank under sudden pressure. He never did get a look at the Capitán Vazquez; what he got was a deep bass voice and a heavy penetrating odour which Lanny had come to think of as the odour of army. Men on the march, or crowded into barracks and other uncomfortable places, do not use water so freely as they have been taught to do in civilian life. Bathing is an artificial practice, easily unlearned.

"*Buenas noches, Señor,*" whispered the American, and the greeting was returned. "El Capitán Vazquez?" he inquired, and the reply was: "*Sí*"—and then silence.

"*Mi Capitán,*" began Lanny, "I am an American art expert visiting Cáceres to inspect your ancient masterpieces, and to purchase paintings which I may dispose of in my home country. Quite by accident I happened to hear one of the officers talking about the prisoners who are confined under your charge, and I heard the name of a young man, the son of an old and very dear friend of mine. I ventured to ask for a meeting with you, wishing to ask your advice about the possibility of my seeing this young man, or at least being able to make sure that he has medical attention, if he needs it. I hope that you will pardon me for taking the liberty of seeking this interview."

"May I ask why you picked out me?" inquired the deep voice.

"Señor, I asked who was in charge of the prisoners, and was told that you had such charge over twenty-four-hour periods."

"It would have been better to come to my *Jefe de Día*."

"I hope that I have not committed an impropriety. I am a stranger in a strange land, and my position is difficult. I am here through the courtesy of distinguished friends in Seville; General Aguilar was kind enough to act on my behalf, and I am travelling on a pass from the office of General Queipo de Llano. If now I take measures on behalf of a Red prisoner, I am apt to embarrass many of my friends, and expose myself to the suspicion of being in sympathy with the prisoner's ideas. I have long watched the tragedy in this young man's family. You perhaps know here in Spain, *mi Capitán*, of young men of good family who take up perverse notions which of late seem to have become the rage among the so-called

intellectuals. That is the case with this English lad—he is no more than that.”

“What is his name?”

“Alfred Pomeroy-Nielson.”

“Yes, I know about him. I was told that there was something in the papers about his case.”

“I did not know, because I have been travelling. But the name is an unusual one, and I am sure it must be the same person. His grandfather belongs to the nobility.”

“That is the one.”

“He is a young *loco* who lost his head, and is paying a dreadful price for it. Do you know if he is well or ill?”

“He was wounded, but has recovered. He is as well as the average, I suppose.”

“His family is well-to-do; not rich but moderate, and of course they must be deeply concerned, because he is in line of succession to the title, which is an old one. It was my thought that while I am here in Spain I might discuss with your authorities the question of a possible exchange of prisoners.”

“That is a matter wholly outside my range, Señor Budd. I am merely one of the keepers of a prison.”

“I understand, *mi Capitán*; but you are a Spaniard while I am an *extranjero*, and I very much need advice. While I have no authority to speak for the parents of this boy, I know them well, and assure you that they would not leave anyone unrewarded who might give help, however slight, towards the ending of this distressing situation.”

So there it was; very tactfully put—but an ex-gangster from Barcelona wouldn’t fail to glimpse the possibilities suddenly spread before his eyes. He would realize that he was dealing with one who understood strategy, and how to make advances while keeping open his line of retreat; a person of influence, who was not to be intimidated or betrayed; a person of wealth, with whom it was much better to co-operate than to quarrel.

VII

Said the Capitán: “You must understand that our country is being attacked by vicious enemies; and we did not ask a rich young Englishman to come here and drop bombs upon our people.”

“I understand that fully, *mi Capitán*. You are entirely right, and the young *loco* is entirely wrong, and has deserved everything he has

got. I say that to you and I shall say it to him. But if he were to be exchanged, you might get back some man of your own who would be of greater use to you."

"As I have told you, I have nothing to do with any question of exchange, and could not even give you advice about it."

"What has occurred to me is that nations at war always need money, especially foreign exchange. There is a well-known practice called ransom"—Lanny had looked up the Spanish word, *rescate*, and suggested that it might be revived. That was a still clearer hint, and the speaker in the darkness waited with strained attention to learn how it was going to be taken.

The reply might have come equally well from a military man or a gangster. "It would take a great deal of money to make up for the damage which a trained pilot might do to our armies and our towns."

"Again you are correct, *mi Capitán*, and I hasten to assure you that my suggestions and inquiries are based upon the certainty that this young man will have learned his lesson, and that there will be no more support given to the Reds by him, either by flying or by agitating."

"How can you promise that, Señor Budd?"

"I have known the family since I was a small boy, and I have known the young man since he was a baby. If he should obtain his release through my pledges, he will be in honour bound to keep them. I do not know whether you have any acquaintance with Englishmen of the ruling classes; one of the things they rarely do is to cheat or break their word." Lanny said that, and then waited, thinking to himself: "If he's a military man he will pursue the subject. If he's a gangster, he'll drop it."

What the deep voice said was: "Let us speak plainly. You are proposing to pay me to help get your friend out of prison?"

"I repeat, *mi Capitán*, I am a stranger here, asking for advice. All that I can say beyond that is to pledge my word of honour as a gentleman that anything you suggest to me will be a secret that I shall carry to my grave." I would like to have the same assurance from you, if it seems consistent with your honour as a soldier."

There was a long silence. The time for a showdown had come now, and Lanny realized that his interlocutor was weighing the chances. At last the voice broke the silence: "Very well, Señor Budd. I accept your word on that basis and I give you mine."

In Lanny's mind was a flash of joy. "He's my man!"

VIII

Without further sparring they got down to business. "You might get your friend out of the tower," said the Capitán de Guardia. "I might help you, but what good would it do? He would be missed, there would certainly be an alarm, and how could you expect to get him out of the country?"

"If it was an escape, I admit that the chances would be slim," replied Lanny. "I have tried to think of some other way, and it has occurred to me that he might die and be carried out."

"But that is not so easily arranged. If a man dies, a physician examines the body, and he is not carried out until that has been done."

"I have tried to imagine how it might happen, *mi Capitán*, but it is difficult because I have never been inside your premises and know nothing about your routine. I have thought out a possible way of escape for my friend, but I am aware that my ideas may seem crude to one who knows the details of your system. However, it would not take long for me to outline a little story, and it might be the means of suggesting some better ideas to you."

"Go ahead and tell it."

"Let us assume that my friend has been complaining about his treatment, and you wish to question him. You have one of your guards bring him to a cell or room apart from anyone else, and you send the guard outside. You whisper to my friend a message which I will give you, so that he will know that you are to be trusted. Then you explain that you are going to pretend to kill him. First he is to scream and curse you, and then you are to draw your gun and fire a shot, or perhaps two or three. When the young man is lying on the floor you spill a bottle of animal blood over his face. He looks quite horrible, and no one will have any doubt that you have fired into his face. By his side there lies a pocket-knife, and you say that he attacked you with it. If you would make a slight cut in your hand or your cheek, that would help. You follow me?"

"So far it is all right—except that the bullets striking the walls of the cell would make plain marks, and be flattened as they would not be if they were fired into a man's face."

"I have thought of that, having had experience with bullets—my family is Budd-Gunmakers, which manufactures the Budd automatic and the Budd machine-gun, with which you may be familiar."

"I have heard of them."

"Perhaps there is a blanket in the cell, and you make it into a

bundle and fire your shots into that. It would have much the same effect as a human body. You might use the blanket to spread over the body later on, and the fact that there were many holes in the blanket would not be noticed in dim light."

"That sounds reasonable enough."

"Now I come to the part about which I cannot be sure, since it depends upon regulations and also upon persons I do not know. It would be necessary for you to have the body carried out to be buried that night under your supervision. I picture you in a state of great excitement; perhaps that would not be difficult to enact, and it would cover any real anxieties you might be feeling. You would curse the dog of an Englishman, you would protest that you had shot him in self-defence, you would enact the scene and shout the story to whatever guards came running. Then you would say that he had made a mess of the cell, and it would occur to you that your *jefe* might be greatly annoyed; you would suggest saving further annoyance by getting the pig's carcass out of the way at once. Is it conceivable that you might have such an impulse, and that afterwards if you were rebuked for a breach of regulations, you would be able to plead the intense excitement of the moment?"

Lanny couldn't tell from the Capitán's voice whether he was smiling or not, but his words suggested it. "You do not need to trouble yourself so much about a killing in one of our prisons, Señor. Such things have happened and may happen again."

"Then I may assume that this part of my story is plausible?"

"It would be unusual for me to take so much trouble with a dead body, but if I did it, I would not expect any rebuke."

"You have a cart or something in which a body would be carried?"

"We have a stable in our courtyard."

"Would you put the body into a coffin, or just dump it into the cart?"

"Either way."

"A coffin or box would be necessary in this case."

"I would give an order."

"You would take a couple of men to dig the grave?"

"We have graves already dug; but I would have to take men to do the burying. It would not be easy to find men who could be trusted with a secret such as this."

"I would not plan to trust them, Señor Capitán. On the way to the cemetery you feel ill, and need what we Americans call a 'bracer,' say a glass of *aguardiente*. You suggest stopping in a *taberna*, and invite the men to accompany you inside. Would that be possible?"

"It would not be according to my practice; but in view of the excitement, it might be made all right."

"Very well, then; you get the men half-drunk; and while that is going on, the prisoner steps into my car, and I put a few flat stones inside the blanket in the coffin. If you get the men drunk enough, they will not do any investigating, and you can keep them busy listening to your rebukes. They bury the stones, and don't even remember which grave it was in."

"*Basta!*" exclaimed the Spaniard. "I believe you have it."

IX

The Capitán de Guardia was not a man of many words. He wanted to think these ideas over, and Lanny let him do so. After a long interval he said: "There is one question which you have not taken up, Señor Budd; an important one for me."

"I know that," replied the American. "But there is no use talking about terms unless I know that something can be done."

"I believe your plan might be carried out; but it would be extremely dangerous, and a man does not take such risks unless he is sure it will be made worth his while."

"*Claro, mi Capitán.* To begin with, put this present into your pocket." He slipped a wad of notes into the other's hand; it must have felt right, for the man said: "*Mil gracias, Señor.*"

"You have guessed the amount," smiled Lanny. "You will find ten one-hundred-peseta notes. I chose small denominations because they are easier to spend in a small town. Consider this as compensation for your coming here this evening. Even if we do not arrive at an agreement, I should not wish you to feel that you have been imposed upon."

"It has been a pleasure to meet you, Señor."

"The same to you, *mi Capitán.*" The Spaniards are extremely ceremonious, and Lanny assumed that gangsters would be like the rest. "And now," he continued, "we have the difficult task of deciding upon the money value of a risk. There is no standard price for such a service, and the agreement will have to be a compromise between what you would like to have and what I can afford. My father is a rich man, but I myself have to earn what I spend; moreover, you must understand that I have only what I brought into Spain for buying pictures, and I have made certain commitments which bind me."

"But I understand that young Englishman's family is rich."

"The grandfather owns an estate which has been heavily taxed and mortgaged since the war. I have known him for some twenty-five years, and can certify that he has always spent more than he has had. I tell you all this so that you may not be cherishing ideas of English and American millions, and if you do so it will be necessary for me to drop the project and let a young *loco* take his chances with the others."

"What is your offer, Señor?"

"I am assuming that you will bring out my friend alive; that is, you will not have missed your aim in the prison."

"You may assume that."

"You will not park the cart in front of the *taberna*, but in a dark spot a little way beyond. When you have started your men to drinking you will suddenly have to go outside, and will tell them to sit there and finish the bottle. You will come to the cart, and I will there place into your hands ten more notes; but this time they will not be hundred-peseta notes, they will be United States hundred-dollar notes, and at the present official market they are worth close to twelve thousand pesetas; on the illegal market they are worth much more, and make a sum on which a Spaniard can have many enjoyments. It would not do for you to exchange United States notes in Cáceres, but I assume that you could get leave and take a trip to Seville, or to one of the resorts near the French border in the north where the money-changers are used to foreign currency."

"That part is all right, Señor Budd; but the sum is very small for what amounts to saving the life of a rich young man."

"I am not through yet. I shall have the task of taking the young man out of the country; and when I return to Cáceres, I will arrange to meet you again, and will hand you five more such notes, in gratitude for your help in keeping the matter quiet in the meantime."

"You surprise me, Señor," said the man. "I assume that you expect to take your friend into Portugal. Do you mean that you would then return to Spain?"

"I mean that I would not leave Spain. I have obligations in this country. I have hired this car from the family of General Aguilar, and am in honour bound to return it to Seville and pay the agreed price. Also, I am negotiating for some paintings here in Cáceres which I hope to buy if I can get permission to carry them out of the country."

"You certainly must have confidence in your ability to get your man out."

"Of course it might happen that something would go wrong,

and I should be obliged to flee with him. In that case I should be embarrassed, because I would seem to have broken my word to you ; it would be all the worse because I would be powerless to write and explain the matter. I can only assure you that I am a man of my word and will make it my duty to see that you get the money at the first possible moment, even if I have to send some trusted person from France to bring it to you."

"I would not care to have a third party brought into the matter under any conditions."

"Let me give this assurance : I will return to Cáceres unless there is definite and immediate danger which compels me to flee. In that event I will owe you not five hundred dollars but one thousand. I will put it to your account at my bank in Cannes, or I will put it in any bank you say, and in any name you say ; or I will hold it until you send me instructions. I assume that your troops are going to put down the Reds, and it might then be pleasant for you to have a vacation on the French Riviera ; if so, the money will be there awaiting you. We cannot put any of this into writing, but I hope that you will accept my word of honour. Juan-les-Pins, Alpes-Maritimes, is my address, and a letter or a wire there will reach me no matter where I am. If I am away, my mother will wire me and I will reply, and she will pay you the money. Understand this : if you do me such a service, I will consider you my friend, and will carry out my obligation to you in the same spirit that is moving me in the case of your prisoner."

X

Capitán Vazquez took time to think over these proposals. He took it for granted that Lanny's hard-luck stories were invented ; but these rich people were so damnably smooth and impressive, they could always beat down the poor man ! He tried to summon his courage, and said : "What you say may be true, Señor Budd ; but the dangers of this project are very great. I should be risking my career and possibly my life. I do not feel that the compensation is enough."

"What do you feel that you should have ?"

"Two thousand American dollars when I deliver the prisoner, and another thousand when you return from Portugal."

"I am sorry, but I haven't that much with me."

"You say that you are going to buy pictures in Cáceres——"

"I have already bought one, and I gave a cheque for that. I

cannot give you a cheque, as you will understand. The other sums I expect to pay here are very small."

"You have ways to get money here from France, without doubt."

"It is not so simple transferring money in war-time; it means delays, which are very bad because I am attracting attention in this town. I will make you a counter-proposition. I will pay you fifteen hundred dollars on the delivery of the prisoner, and five hundred more on my return to Cáceres—or, as I said before, if I cannot return to Cáceres, then a thousand dollars payable in France at your order. That will mean a total of something over thirty thousand pesetas for you, or perhaps forty thousand if you exchange them on the illegal market. It is a sum on which you could have many enjoyments."

There was another silence. The Capitán felt sure that he was being cheated, but the elegant gentleman had him bluffed. He said: "*Bueno está!*"

"How soon will you be ready?"

"There is no reason for delay so far as I am concerned. But you have to get a bottle of animal blood."

"I have it in the car."

"The devil you say!"

"I sacrificed a chicken this afternoon, so it is good and fresh. I have everything, even to the pocket-knife with which you may cut yourself if you have the nerve." Lanny slipped him the knife. "Watch out for a vein," he added.

"You mean to do it to-night?" demanded the other.

"Why not?"

"*Jesucristo!*" whispered the Capitán. "What am I getting myself in for?" He seemed quite human all of a sudden. "See here, Señor Budd, you are going into deep water, and I'm going with you. Are you sure you've got some way to get that fellow to the border?"

"I would not be starting unless I could finish. It would be a long story, and it might be better for you not to know it."

"It won't do me any good not to know it if you get caught. You realize that pickets on the road may search your car at night?"

"I have passes for two."

"I can't imagine how the hell you did it, but I take your word. Who else has been taken into this plan?"

"Nobody else, I assure you. It was all very simple, and some day in Juan-les-Pins I may have the pleasure of telling you about it."

"There's this that worries me; if that *loco* of yours should come back to Madrid to fight——"

"You have my word of honour about that, *mi Capitán*. He will return to his studies at Oxford, which is one of the English universities."

"But his presence there will be noted. The newspapers will report his story, and we have agents in London who will telegraph it here. Then they go to the cemetery and dig up a box of rocks! *Virgen Santísima!*"

"I have thought of that also, *amigo mío*. The lad can say, quite simply, that he has returned from Madrid. He did not crash in Nationalist territory but in Red, and he was nursed back to health in a peasant hut in the Sierra Toledo. The story that he was in a Franco prison is all nonsense, and it must be some other fellow who has been using his name."

"*Por Dios!*" exclaimed the deep voice. "You are *un hombre hábil!* Will you swear to me that your friend will stick to that?"

"In my country," replied Lanny, "when we make a deal we shake hands on it." He clasped a large tough hand with much hair on the back.

32

And Win or Lose It All

I

LANNY said: "We have been staying in one spot a long while," and his new friend replied: "Every wall in this town has ears." So Lanny got into the front seat and drove the car round a couple of blocks, keeping watch in his little mirror as he did so. He stopped in a new place, and returned to the back seat, where the pair conducted a curious sort of rehearsal. Lanny had watched Rick directing plays, and now he put the Capitán through a complete *ensayo*, all in whispers and in darkness.

The Spaniard said he knew no Latin, except for a few religious phrases; Lanny now taught him three words from Ovid, and charged him that his first action upon entering the cell with Alfy was to whisper: "*Bella gerant alii!*" Then he would add: "I have just come from Lanny Budd, and am going to take you out to him. I am going to pretend to shoot you, and you are to lie perfectly still and as limp as possible. No matter what happens, do not move or make-

a sound. I am going to pour chicken blood over your face. It won't be pleasant but you can stand it. I am going to fire three shots, but not at you. First you are to shout at me and call me names."

"What names?" interposed the stage director.

"Won't he know the names?" inquired the actor.

"Not in Spanish. You must tell him."

"All right, then. I say: '*Bandido! Maldito! Asesino!*'"

"Very good. And now?"

"I tell him to lie down. I pour the blood over his face."

"And the bottle?"

"I put the bottle in my pocket."

"And the cork?"

"I put the cork in the bottle first."

"You won't forget and let the cork fall on the floor and get lost?"

"*Por Dios, no!*"

"And then?"

"Then I cut my hand."

"No, that is wrong. You have forgotten the blanket."

"*Caramba!* The blanket. I take the blanket from the bed and fold it as many times as I can and then lay it on the floor."

"How near to the prisoner?"

"Near, but not so that I will hit him."

"How near?"

"Six feet. Then I fire into the blanket."

"No, wrong again. You cut yourself."

"Hell, yes—I cut my hand—in the soft part. I had to fight him and take the knife away from him."

"And what do you do with the knife?"

"Drop it beside him. And then fire into the blanket."

"Bang, bang, bang. And then?"

"I grab up the blanket. I sweep up the bullets from under it and put them into my pocket. I throw the blanket on to the bed. At the same time I shout for the guard and I start raising hell."

"What do you say?"

"I say: '*Jesucristo!*' I say: '*Virgen Santísima!*' I say: '*El canal la felón,* he tried to kill me! He cut me! *Asesino!*'—all the things that he called me. I say he called me this and that. I go loco—*por Dios*, I shall feel that way anyhow."

"Not too much," said Lanny. "A good actor never loses himself in his role. Something unforeseen might happen."

"*Dios no lo quiera!* I say: '*El jefe* will be furious with me."

This Englishman is rich, he is important, and I am in one hell of a mess. Look at him ! Look at the floor ! I shot his face to pieces —I was furious with him.' Then I say : ' Go and fetch a coffin. We will put the scoundrel in it.' Is that all right ? "

" How many men will answer your call ? "

" There should be three at least."

" Send two for the coffin. Keep the third with you. Don't be left alone with the body, for that might be suspicious. You go on pacing the cell and cursing."

" *Sí*, that comes easy in my business."

" Here is a clean handkerchief, so that you can tie up your hand. It has no identification marks on it."

" *Por Dios*, you think of everything. And what now ? "

" Most important—the blanket."

" Oh, yes ; when they bring in the coffin—not before then—I take the blanket and wrap it round the body."

" You are careful never to turn your torch on it ; and you will surely not forget and leave it on the bed, for the blanket with a dozen bullet holes through it would certainly be hard to explain."

" *Caramba !* " exclaimed the Capitán de Guardia. " I am beginning to lose my nerve. Let us go over the damned thing once more."

II

When he was letter-perfect, they shook hands again, and Lanny discovered that the hand had become moist and had lost something of its firmness. He said : " *Coraje !* It is all clear now, and will go like the River Tagus up in the mountains. Put it through, and no matter what happens, understand that I will keep faith and will never talk."

" *Dominus nobiscum !* " said the pious gangster.

Lanny drove a couple of blocks and then let him out to walk to the barracks. They had agreed upon the *taberna* where the *aguardiente* was to be drunk, and the exact spot where Lanny was to stop. First he went to the outskirts of the town and from a vacant bit of land collected the stones, an easy enough task in this part of Estremadura. He chose flat ones, which would not roll, and enough to equal the weight of Alfy, allowing for his losses in prison. This done, he drove to the spot appointed, a few yards beyond the entrance to the wineshop. He drew up his car under the shelter of a tree, protected from too bright moonlight.

He got into the back seat, and after that there was nothing to

do but wait—and, imagine all the things which might go wrong. The *Jefe de Día* might arrive unexpectedly and take charge of the proceedings. The prison physician might arrive and go through with his routine of examining the body. Alfy might sneeze in the coffin. Or suppose the Capitán had been setting a trap for Lanny, and he now appeared with a squad of his guards? Lanny had read some of Lope de Vega, and knew the violence and fury of which the haughty Spanish temperament is capable; a ghastly thought had come to his mind, of what the captain of the watch might consider a proper jest to perpetrate against a Red sympathizer. Suppose he actually shot Alfy in the face, and then brought him here in the cart and allowed Lanny to make the discovery! What a barrack-room tale that would make! What a theme for a Falangista dramatist, if ever there should be such a thing!

III

Here comes a peasant cart, and Lanny watches it from a corner of his rear window. He can see in the bright moonlight that a mule is drawing it, and that three men are riding in the front seat. It approaches with Spanish dignity; it is a funeral cart, though an impromptu one; it bumps loudly on the stone-paved street. It passes the *taberna*, and is about to pass Lanny; that is according to plan. The Capitán's sudden thirst develops at exactly the right instant, and the cart stops and draws in by the side of the street. Lanny has his curtains drawn and is slumped in his seat, so they do not see him; his windows are closed, so he hears only a murmur of voices. But he has rehearsed the scene twice, and knows what the Capitán will be saying—that his nerves are shot and that he cannot go on without a drink.

The cart is just behind the car; so far everything is perfect. Lanny hears the footsteps of the men, and forces himself to wait. When he judges it safe to peer out through the rear window, the first thing he sees is the head of the mule about ten feet away from him. Apparently the patient creature does not move except when compelled to by those superior beings who have brought him into existence and who condition his life. He stands with head drooping, and perhaps is already asleep. Lanny will not awaken him.

The trembling conspirator observes that the driver's seat is empty, and there is no one near the door of the *taberna*. The moment has come, and he slips out of the car, leaving the door open. He must walk, not too fast; no one ever runs in Spain—unless it is a

war, or possibly a house on fire or the pursuit of a thief. He goes to the back of the cart, and there is a pinewood coffin. Now is the moment when he will find out if this scenario has been composed by Lope de Vega! He lifts the lid of the coffin an inch and whispers: "Romney!"

Instantly comes a murmur: "Right!" An English word and an English voice.

Lanny takes a look up and down the silent street. It is nearly midnight, and no one will be about, except perhaps someone leaving the *taberna*. If such a one should behold this sight, he would surely yell: "*Mil diablos!*" A dead man rising out of a coffin, ghastly, his face smeared with blood, shining in the moonlight!

"Come out," Lanny says. "Be quiet." He gives him a help down from the cart, for he might be near to fainting. Lanny himself is unpleasantly aware of his knees shaking and his teeth chattering. He manages to say: "Get into the back seat and lie still." He assists his friend into the car, then closes the door silently, and reaches round through the door and locks the rear door.

Now for the stones. They are piled on the floor of the car, to the right of the driver. Lanny takes one and carries it—walk, don't run!—to the cart. He lays it on the floor of the cart and goes for another. When he has brought five he will climb in, take off the coffin lid, lay them in a row, and cover them with the blanket-shroud. It is one of the ticklish moments of the adventure; if anybody should come out of the *taberna* and witness it, an explanation might be difficult to find. Lanny's hands are shaking so that he has hardly enough power to lift the stones.

He assumes that the Capitán is on guard inside. It has been arranged that the Capitán shall take his seat at a table near the door, and if he sees anyone starting to leave the *taberna*, he will call to him and ask him to have a glass. A free drink, and conversation with a distinguished person of the town—such a combination will not be refused. If some man should be so drunk that he does not halt, the Capitán will challenge him, accusing him of a discourtesy, and starting an argument—anything to keep him occupied. Lanny has not been able to rehearse the moving of the stones, and doesn't know just how long it will take, but there is no harm in allowing too much time. The mule will not run away and neither will the coffin.

Perhaps the Capitán has an idea that Lanny might do so. He comes out just as the coffin lid is being put in place, and it gives his fellow-conspirator a nasty start. Lanny gets down from the cart and goes to the car—walk, don't run! The Capitán is supposed to

be sick, perhaps vomiting, or answering the call of Nature. He strolls over to the car with dignity ; and when he is close and safe in the shadow of a tree, Lanny whispers : "*Está bien !*" He holds out his hand, and presses a round wad into the hand which is tied up with a handkerchief. "*Mil quinientos dólares y mil quinientas gracias,*" he says.

"*Gracias a Vd.,*" replies the Capitán. He does not attempt to count the notes or to examine them in the moonlight. Perhaps he has acquired confidence in the American sense of honour ; again, perhaps he is too nervous.

"O.K. ?" inquires Lanny, and the reply is "O.K." There is a quick handshake, and then : "*Adiós.*" Lanny steps into his car and closes the door softly, slides over into the driver's seat, starts the engine, and rolls away.

IV

The first and only performance of this Spanish melodrama had gone perfectly, and the curtain was down. But there was another to be played immediately afterwards, one entitled *The Flight to Portugal*. The opening scene would be just outside Cáceres, where Lanny knew there was a military post with a black-and-white-striped barrier across the road. Before playing that scene, the leading "juvenile" would have to repair to his dressing-room for a quick change.

One street was the same as another at midnight in that silent old town. So, Lanny turned a couple of corners and halted in the shadow of another tree. Then he leaned back and whispered to Alfie : "Are you all right ?"

The reply was : "Topping." Then : "How in God's name did you pull it off ?"

"A long story," Lanny said. "Now we have to hurry. The first thing is to wash your face. Open the suitcase. There's everything right on top. The bottle has water in it ; don't waste any."

The fugitive went to work. "What is this blood ?" he whispered. When told it was a respectable elderly hen he said "Ugh," and fell to scrubbing vigorously in the dark.

"I thought you might need to shave," explained the rescuer. "You've got to look right."

"I've got quite a bit of brush, to be sure."

"Take your time ; I don't think there'll be any pursuit."

"Won't they find that coffin rather light when they come to lift it ?"

"I put stones in it, about the right amount."

"Oh, swell! I wondered what you were doing all that time."

"Watch out you don't cut yourself. We've had blood enough."

"Have you got clothes for me?"

"That's an Italian officer's uniform underneath your shaving-tools."

"Righto. But I don't know any Italian."

"You don't have to; you'll be in Portugal in two or three hours."

"I don't know any Portuguese either!" Alfy had recovered his English manner—if he had ever lost it. He would behave as if he had been shot and carried out in a coffin every night since the war began. "I say, old man," he remarked, in between the movements of scraping his chin in the dark, "all this is really ripping of you."

"It's been the jolliest lark ever," replied Lanny, who had been an Englishman himself, off and on, ever since he had met Alfy's father. "But we're not quite out of the woods yet, you know."

"What do we do next?"

"First you have to be a proper Italian Air Force Capitano, and then we drive to the River Tagus and put you across in a boat. You have to look right, even to your shoes, because we might have to get out of the car at one of the road control posts."

"Will we meet any Italians?"

"I doubt it. If we do, you are sound asleep sitting up, and I will explain that you are exhausted after a long spell on the Jarama front."

When the fugitive was all scrubbed and polished, Lanny turned a flashlight on him and made sure that he would pass. Then he said: "Your name is Capitano Vittorio di San Girolama."

"Oh, so that's it! Is he in on this?"

"He was supposed to be, but he backed out. The last I heard he and Marceline were in Seville. I have a pass for the pair of them. If any question is asked, I'll say that your wife is not with us."

"Won't they know where Vittorio is?"

"I don't think we'll meet anything but Civil Guards, perhaps a corporal with half a dozen soldiers watching the roads. They've never heard of the Capitano and I doubt if they'll even make note of the name. As soon as you're across the river I'll tear up the pass."

One problem more to be dealt with—the worn and blood-stained prison clothing which Alfy had just discarded, and the blood-stained towel with which he had cleaned his face. It wouldn't do

to have these found, either in the car or by the roadside. Lanny rolled it into as tight a bundle as he could and stuffed it into the bag which held the car-tools and the jack. Stowed under the driver's seat, it would pass for working-clothes, and he was sure that no one would notice it. Later he would drop it into the river.



With the new-made Capitano by his side, Lanny began the drive, and for the first time they could talk without whispering. "There's a sentry-post just outside," he explained. "I shall have to show our passes there. I've already travelled once on mine, but they didn't take it up and I suppose there's no harm in using it again. The men who are there now will hardly be the same as the day squad. Strictly speaking, my pass expired at midnight, but I can say I was delayed, and I doubt if they'll be technical. Vittorio's pass is good only as far as Cáceres, but I don't think they'll dare be rude to an Italian officer. Sit very straight and look stern. If anyone asks you a question, I will answer."

"Righto," said the baronet's grandson.

They came to the post, with a barrier across the road. Two sleepy-looking guards leaned over it, and Lanny greeted them politely and presented his documents. One man examined them and passed them on to the other; Lanny doubted if either could read very well. Both documents looked impressive, and so did the travellers. "*Sí, sí, Señores*," said the men, and lifted the barrier. The car moved on and sped away into the hills.

"I think it will be that way all the time," declared Lanny. "If so, we have only a couple of hours together, and I must tell you about Portugal and what you're to do there."

"You're not coming with me?"

"I still have several things to attend to in Spain."

"Will you be safe, Lanny?"

"Once I get rid of you, I'm the American art expert, and my only problem is whether they'll let me take my paintings out. Listen carefully, because all this is important."

"Spill it!" said Alfy, who had been flying with American pilots, a corrupting influence.

"We're to be rowed across the river by a peasant. I don't know where he'll land us, but I saw a house on the other side. I'll tell him not to land us too close and wake the dogs. As soon as the boat leaves, you're to get out of your Italian clothes and into the

mufti which is at the bottom of the suitcase. From that time on you're an Englishman. Your name is Romney—let's say Albert. Is that O.K.?"

"Albert Romney at your service."

"You roll the Italian uniform into a bundle and throw it as far out into the river as you can. It will sink pretty soon. Then you wait till you can see, and walk to the farmhouse; better have a stick for the dogs, also to support you, because you have sprained your ankle. You were in a car, it broke down, and you started to walk. You pay the peasant to take you to the railway."

"Have I got money?"

"You will find both Portuguese and English money in the mufti. You're to go by train or autobus to Lisbon and stay at the Avenida Palace Hotel until you get a wire from me. The point is, I can't afford to take any chance of your being recognized until I'm out of Franco Spain; so you have to stay in your hotel room, and your sprained ankle is the excuse. You might put your shoe in the suitcase and tie a towel round your foot. You don't want any doctor, you just want to lie down and rest. There are a couple of books in the suitcase and you can get foreign newspapers. Get some food and build up—it may take me a week, and I hope you won't be too bored."

"I'm bally well used to being bored," said the baronet's grandson.

"That's so; I forgot. I'll send you a wire—best wishes from the family, or anything. It means that I'm in Cádiz, on the point of sailing. So then your ankle is well and you can go by steamer to London, or fly."

"Am I still Romney, or am I Alf?"

"If you can get into England as Romney, it would be good. I want everything kept quiet, and the less fuss made over you the better. The point is, I've had to make several pledges and you have to keep them. You weren't doing any good in that prison, you know."

"What do I have to do?"

"First, go back to Magdalen and forget the Spanish war. I couldn't have asked anybody here to help you unless I promised that."

"I suppose not. I am under parole?"

"Exactly. And the other condition is that you will say you were never in Franco Spain. Your story has been widely published in England, and when you show up there, the story of your escape would come back here at once and they would dig up the coffin full of stones. So you have to say that you crashed in Loyalist territory, that you were cared for in a peasant hut in the Toledo mountains—the part which the Loyalists held—and that you came out by way of France. Say just as little about it as you can, don't see any

newspaper men, and don't let any photographs be taken. You did what you could and now you're finished, and back at your studies, and that's that."

"All right, Lanny—and thanks again. You must have paid that bloke Vazquez a thumping sum."

"I got off amazingly cheap."

"How much, actually?"

"So far, less than seventeen hundred dollars. I have to pay him another five hundred when I get back to Cáceres."

"What else did you pay?"

"Only some small change. With all the costs of the trip, including Vittorio and Marcy, I doubt if it'll come to four thousand dollars."

"My grandfather will pay it back to you, Lanny, and I'll pay it to him as soon as I'm earning."

"Two things you can consider, Alf: it's my cause as well as yours, and I had a lot to do with getting you into this mess; second, I'll make back the costs out of the pictures I'm handling."

"No good," said Alf. "You have made your own contributions to the cause and you don't have to make mine; second, your picture deals are yours, and you have to do the work just the same."

"But if you pay my travelling expenses, the art expert is getting a free ride."

"We'll figure up and go halves on those expenses; but, Vittorio and Marceline are on me, for I don't suppose you'd have brought them except to get the pass and the uniform for me."

Lanny chuckled. "We'll have a lot of figuring to do when I get back to England. Meantime, Sir Alfred has put a thousand pounds to my account in London, and please tell him I'm going to return it as soon as I get out of Spain. You know as well as I do how such a sum would tie him up."

VI

Alfy wanted to know how this miracle had been wrought, and the story lasted all the way to Alcáñtara—interrupted only when they came to a village with a sentry-post. Each time, Alf sat stiff and straight, a haughty Italian officer who didn't bother to salute Spanish Guardias Civiles and didn't care whether they saluted him; and they didn't. But they raised no question as to his reasons for travelling in the small hours of the morning. The formalities were brief, for there was considerable traffic, and all of it in a hurry.

They were bringing in through Portugal new tanks, guns, and supplies to make up for the wreckage which lay rusting in spring rains in the valley of the Henares; probably this Italian flying-officer was going to Lisbon to get a bombing-plane and fly it in. When the car was speeding on, Lanny told about what had happened at Guadalajara. The prisoners in Cáceres had heard rumours about it, but no details. "It looks as if I wouldn't be needed any more," said the Englishman.

There were several guard posts along the excellent Tagus highway, and Lanny's heart was in his mouth every time. There was always a chance that something might have gone wrong with the burial and that a telephone alarm might have been sent out. But nothing of the sort happened; there were no delays and no objections. Lanny had noted by his speedometer the exact distance to the farmhouse, so that he would have no chance of passing it in the dark. The moon was going down, which was obliging. When he came to the grass-grown lane he switched off the car lights so that they might not shine across the river. He waited until his eyes had got used to what was left of the moonlight, and then he crept slowly in towards the house.

The dogs had been taken inside. When Lanny knocked on the door they set up a tremendous clamour; but the peasant quickly shut them up. Lanny helped Alfie out of the car, the latter carrying the suitcase and Lanny carrying the bundle of prison clothing. "*Buenas noches, Señores,*" murmured the peasant, and Lanny answered for the two of them; Alfie did not once speak.

They followed the man down the path to the shore; there was light enough to see, and they used neither match nor torch at any time. The peasant got a boat out of the bushes; he helped them in dry-shod, and Lanny, after accepting this help, put one hundred pesetas into the outstretched hand. The man whispered: "*Gracias, Señor,*" and the two passengers seated themselves. The man pushed off into the current and began to row. He had muffled the oars, and the thoroughness with which he had done it suggested that it was not the first time. Lanny, in the stern seat, held the bundle of prison clothing behind him and let it quietly go. Also he tore up the Vittorio pass and set that afloat. The night was cold, and he was shivering.

They reached the shore of Portugal without any sort of incident, and Alfie stepped out. Lanny gave him the suitcase, and they exchanged a handclasp which they tried to make firm; Lanny whispered: "*Adiós,*" and Alfie, according to agreement, made no reply. Lanny, resuming his seat, said to the boatman: "Two

hundred pesetas," and put them into his hand. The boatman said: "*Muchas gracias*," and pushed the boat off with an oar.

He rowed in silence, and apparently had no difficulty in finding his own landing. When he stepped ashore, Lanny handed him another lot of money, saying: "Two hundred pesetas," and adding: "I will go into the house with you while you count them." The peasant might have said: "I trust you, Señor"; but not many peasants are made that way. He said again: "*Muchas gracias, Señor*."

They went up to the house and Lanny entered. The man lighted a candle and took the three wads of notes from his pocket, spread them out on the table, and slowly and painfully counted them. Lanny sat on a stool, and when the ceremony was over he added ten pesetas to the pile. "The *propina*," he said; and the peasant brought out a bottle of wine and poured a glass for each. Lanny touched the other's glass with an elegant gesture and said: "*Buena suerte*." The peasant replied: "*Salud, Señor*." They went out to the car, and the man guided Lanny while he backed out of the lane without lights. When the car was on the highway, he turned the lights on and sped away.

VII

He didn't go far, because he didn't want to reach the first military post until he was sure the guard would have been changed. He found a clear spot off the road and parked there, turned off the lights, locked himself in, and took a nap. When it was broad daylight he felt sure of not meeting anybody who had seen him travelling with Alf. If by ill luck it happened, he was prepared to explain that the Italian officer had found other transportation.

He drove back to Cáceres without incident, and went to his room. He rang and ordered some food, and it was brought by another waiter. Lanny said: "Where is José?" and the reply was: "He is no longer with us, Señor."

Lanny had had experience in not showing his emotions, so he said casually: "Indeed? What has happened to him?"

"He has gone to join the Army, Señor."

"What?" exclaimed the guest. "Will the Army take a man with a club foot?"

"Not to fight, Señor, but to be a cook."

"Oh, a cook! Is he a good one?"

"I don't know, Señor. All I know is that he left a note saying that it was his intention so to serve."

"Well, I shall miss him; he was a good man."

"I will do my best to take his place, Señor." That was the proper time to hand a tip, and Lanny did so. To himself he thought: "José is going to beat me to Bienvenu!"

Lanny had a trouble now. How the devil was he going to get hold of the Capitán? But he didn't have to worry very long, for while he was at dinner that evening he was called to the telephone and a deep bass voice said: "Señor Budd?" When he identified himself the voice said: "The first place; the same hour."

"Sí, sí," replied the *americano*.

So, near the alcalde's house the heavy form climbed into the car. "All well with you?" asked the voice, and Lanny said: "All well; and with you?" "The same," replied the voice; and straightway Lanny began: "*Uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco.*" Each was a note laid flat in the Capitán's undamaged hand. "*Gracias, Señor,*" said the voice.

"You found the other notes O.K.?" inquired Lanny, and when the reply was in the affirmative, he added: "It has been a great pleasure to meet you, *mi Capitán*, and I shall remember you with pleasure."

"*Lo mismo a Vd., Señor Budd.* And may I ask, what do you intend to do now?"

"I expect to finish a little business here in town and then drive back to Seville."

"*Bueno,*" replied the Capitán. He climbed out of the car, whispered: "*Adiós, Señor,*" and was gone.

Lanny's offers for the paintings completely broke the hearts of the Cáceres bourgeoisie. But he said: "I have no certainty that I shall be permitted to take them out of the country. It depends upon whether I can persuade the authorities that they are not works of art; it is only on that basis that I dare buy them." He bought three medium-sized Holy Virgins at very low prices. Then he paid his bill at the hotel, distributed his *propinas*, and said good-bye to the lieutenant and other friends. One of them said: "How I wish that you were taking me with you!" It was the nearest approach to a revolutionary remark that he had heard from anybody, excepting only the lame waiter.

VIII

Lanny was safe now, and had nothing to do but keep out of the way of military traffic bound for the siege of Madrid. His money

was running low, but he knew he could arrange to get some in Seville. He put his mind on the problem of the paintings of the Señora Villareal, and decided that he didn't want to take the responsibility of trying to smuggle them out of Spain, with or without influence. He had discovered that he wanted something quite different, which was to see Trudi. He hadn't dared to write her a word from Spain, and all that he had received was a note, signed Corning, telling him that she had some new sketches to show him on his return. That meant that she was safe and well; but he wanted to see her, and going to New York without seeing her didn't appeal to him as in any way romantic or exciting.

So before entering the city of Seville he drove to the Villareal estate and talked with the steward. He explained that he had agreed to take the Señora's paintings to New York, but it had been pointed out to him that the Franco government might be enforcing the old government's law against the exporting of Spanish works of art. The Señora thought it was not so, but she might be mistaken, and the danger would be greater if Lanny tried it, because he was known to be an art expert. Lanny's proposal was that Señor Lopez, the steward, should take the paintings out of their frames, wrap each one carefully, and pack them between the front portion of a bedstead and the rear portion. This could be crated and shipped as "household furniture," and if the steward himself had the crate carted to Seville and put it in charge of shipping-brokers there, the shipment would surely go to Marseilles without any questions being raised.

"I would write and ask the Señora's approval," he explained, "but of course one cannot put such things into a letter, especially in these times of censorship. I will go at once to her and explain."

The steward assented. Lanny gave him a generous tip and the packing was carefully done. Incidentally Lanny took his four newly acquired Virgins off the frames to which they were tacked and rolled them into one packet. When he got to Seville, he would buy some sheets of drawing-paper and roll them up in it, and he guessed that if he carried that packet on to the steamer himself, there would be no questions asked.

He had received in Cáceres a brief note from Marceline, asking for more money and saying that they had moved to a cheaper hotel. Driving into Seville, Lanny found the Capitano in a state of great discouragement, for the salary he was receiving was entirely inadequate to the support of such a very elegant wife. The news from the Guadalajara front had taken all the Fascist starch out of him, and he hinted at a desire to get out of his predicament on the plea

of ill-health and return with Lanny to Bienvenu. The art expert was greatly shocked, and said: "Oh, Vittorio, you couldn't desert your cause—now in its hour of trial!"

"It's going to be a long and nasty fight, Lanny, and Marceline wasn't brought up to stand hardships. Do you realize that it sometimes gets as hot as a hundred and twenty degrees in the summer-time here in Seville?"

"Yes, but everybody takes a siesta, and the nights are delightful."

"The mosquitoes are here already," declared the young Fascist hero.

"It seems to me your party would never respect you if you deserted them now, Vittorio." So said the malicious brother-in-law. You're in the army now!

Of course they wanted to know what he had accomplished on his journey. He had given time to thinking exactly what to say, and now he said it. "I made certain that Alfy is not in Cáceres. I didn't make any further efforts. I found it extremely difficult to make connections and find out even a little."

"Then you had your trip all for nothing?" exclaimed Marceline.

"No, I saw some wonderful old Roman ruins, and a lot of fine religious paintings." Lanny had been accustomed to saying things like that with a grin, but now he was learning to keep a dead sober face.

"Oh, by the way," remarked the Capitano, "don't forget to let me have that uniform."

"I'm so sorry!" responded Lanny. "Somebody carried that suitcase off and I never saw it again."

"*Diacine!*" exclaimed the other.

"I promised you a new one, and I'll pay for it. But since you're going to spend the summer in Seville, perhaps you'd rather have some lighter material."

IX

Lanny returned the hired car, paid the agreed price, and exchanged thanks and compliments. That was his last duty, except to give his dancing sister a little money and promise her a little more. It was hard for her to understand the sudden alterations of his mood, from stinginess to lavish generosity and then back again. "We still might find out something about Alfy," she said alluringly.

He answered: "If you do, let me know and I'll come."

He took the train to Cádiz, and in the harbour by good fortune found a Swedish steamer about to sail for Marseilles. He engaged passage, and by telephoning to Seville he got hold of Señor Lopez

and arranged to have the "household furniture" put on the same vessel. Lanny himself walked on board with his roll which looked like charts, and nobody asked what was in it. His last act before the vessel sailed was to send two telegrams, one to Beauty, telling her to meet him, and the other to Albert Romney, Avenida Palace Hotel, Lisbon, saying: "Family joins in kindest regards all well here."

The next two days were a perpetual *smörgåsbord*. He had been in Stockholm once, on a cruise of the yacht *Bessie Budd*, so he was prepared for enormous Swedish meals. The officers practised their English on him and he told them about Franco Spain from the point of view of a strict neutral. He would not forget that this was a war zone, and he wouldn't even write letters until he was safe on the soil of the French Republic. When the vessel docked, there was his ample blooming mother, waving happily; she was alone, except for the chauffeur, and Lanny knew what that meant—she wanted his story right hot off the griddle.

They sent the man to get his lunch, and Lanny took her for a short drive in order to be alone. She was one of very few who would be entrusted with the real facts. She clasped her hands and had tears in her eyes, because he had been in such dreadful peril, and would persist in doing such things—her only and her precious son! He said: "It's all right, and the family will be glad to see Alf. Don't forget the story he's going to tell; when he arrives, you can say you had it from the family. Also you can write and tell it to Marceline."

They went to a hotel and he treated her to a modest luncheon, keeping the cream pitcher on his side of the table. Then he wrote a couple of notes; one would go by airmail to Rick, saying: "Alfy is well and on his way to you. Tell no one but the family until you see him. You will understand when you hear his story." The other was to Trudi, and would go by ordinary post, for they had agreed that telegrams were barred, and all letters were to be of the plainest and cheapest-appearing sort. "The big painting is perfect," he wrote. "It has been carefully packed and shipped to England. I am curious to see your new sketches. Will arrive in a couple of days." If any Gestapo agent managed to purloin that note, he wouldn't get much.

X

Lanny saw the "household furniture" off the ship and arranged with the customs brokers to put it into a fireproof warehouse pending further instructions. Then the chauffeur drove them to Bienvenu, Lanny talking about art and architecture in Southern and Western

Spain, and Beauty telling the latest gossip of the Coast of Pleasure ; it was all right for the chauffeur to hear that, because the servants knew everything anyhow.

Beauty said : " Oh, by the way, I had a note from a man named José, who says he met you in Spain. I was just going to send for him when your telegram came."

" Where is he ? " Lanny inquired.

" He's staying in Cannes."

" He gave me some help. I'll tell you about him." He had already told her the story, and now he took some papers out of his pocket and wrote on the back of an envelope : " the lame waiter," and showed her the words.

Thus his first duty upon arriving home was to send a telegram telling José to take a taxi and come out. Beauty was in a state of trepidation, for a servant means so much to a woman—especially a butler, who bosses the others. But Leese was developing such terrible varicose veins ! And if Lanny was sure this poor crippled man could get about—he could hardly make a very impressive appearance, but if he could really learn French, and if he wouldn't steal the silver ! " Lanny, you are so reckless about making promises—and for me to keep ! "

However, it turned out all right. José had got himself a decorous black suit and tie and was all ready for his role. His lameness wasn't offensive, and he was humble and grateful, a serious man, well pounded by fate. He told the story of his flight from Cáceres ; he had paid the driver of an empty supply lorry to take him to Cádiz, and had ridden all the way lying under some blankets with only a hunk of bread and a bottle of water to sustain him. He had got passage on a ship to Marseilles, and his life's savings had barely sufficed to bring him here and outfit him. Lanny translated what he said, and the mother was touched. She told Lanny : " Give him some money, and tell him to go back to Cannes and get somebody to teach him French. He mustn't come here till I've explained matters to Leese and got her out of the house. Otherwise she might tear his eyes out." José was relieved at these instructions, for he had been worrying about that very thing.

Next Lanny went to call on Señora Villareal and told her what he had done. He had to run up to Paris for a week or so, he explained, and then he would be ready to return to Marseilles, have the paintings properly packed, and take them to New York. He told her the news about her various friends, and how gracious they had been to him. Sadly he told her about the terrible mess the Italians had been making in Spain, and she agreed that his advice had been good ;

she complimented this conscientious art expert, and would live the rest of her life without knowing what use he had made of her introductions.

XI

All aboard for Paris! Lanny had a wife in that Ville Lumière. Sometimes he woke up in the middle of the night and was startled to realize that he had got another wife. And why did he have to be leaving her all the time? Perhaps the wife was thinking the same thing. Wives are apt to be confining.

Now he was going to her, and the hum of the engine matched the racing of his blood. The wind which blew against the car had come from her, and it said: "Hurry! Hurry!" But another voice interposed: "Take it easy!" for it was raining, and this road up the valley of the Rhône might be slippery in spots, and it was better to arrive late than not at all.

A strange world that Trudi lived in, the "underground" world of miners and counter-miners. "Old mole, work'st i' the earth so fast?" Lanny couldn't telegraph or telephone to say that he was coming; if anything delayed him, he couldn't explain. When Trudi received a note saying that someone was coming to inspect her sketches, she went out and bought a supply of food and then shut herself in her studio and waited. Every step in the hall made her pulses leap; if the steps paused before her door, her heart pounded so that she was almost suffocated.

Lanny would drive to his hotel and have his car put in the garage. Then, carrying a suitcase, he would walk once round Trudi's block, making sure there was no spy on his trail. He would pause in front of a shop window and examine furtively the houses across the street, to see if there were loiterers in doorways. Then he would go upstairs and give a special tap on Trudi's door, and when it came open, he would slip inside without a sound and wait until she had bolted the door before he took her in his arms.

But after that it was the same as with other people. She forgot her fears, she forgot the Gestapo for a while. Powerful as Herr Himmler might be, and influential with the French police, he couldn't break into this room and take Trudi out of Lanny's arms, or Lanny out of Trudi's. She clung to him with passion that surprised him—she had been so reserved for so many years. She had given all her devotion to a cause, and had been impersonal and business-like when she met him. But now she had missed him, and it was no longer improper to tell him so!

When their first raptures had passed he told her about A quickly, in a sketch, to relieve her anxiety, her bewilderment the feat he had performed ; then again, in detail, for it was to the most wonderful of anti-Fascist stories. She was the one could appreciate it best, the one to whom he most wanted to tell. Achieving the feat had been a double satisfaction, first the help of Alfie and his family, and second the prospect of telling the story to Trudi. She would live every moment of it, shudder with fear at the dangers, then clasp him to her bosom to make sure that he was out of it, safe and alive.

Such is the life of women in war-time, swinging between the extremes of grief and pride. They send their men forth to do their duty and then seize them in their arms and drag them back. " (Lanny, stay a while this time ! " exclaimed this " underground woman. " Stay and have a little happiness ! " But only a minute or two later she was crying : " Oh, poor Spain ! Is it going to be saved, Lanny ? I can't endure to see another people murdered ! "

They had chosen a bad time to be born.
